

A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION
ISSUE 70
MARCH 1990

The Games machine

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THE HAPPENIN' GUIDE TO COMPUTER GAMES ■ STUNNING NEW LOOK ISSUE!

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SPACE ACE

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own game!
Complete game
guide page 66



USA GOES CRAZY!

Action packed
show report



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Consoles in!

THE DEF GUIDE TO CONSOLES

PLUS: A PC ENGINE II MUST BE WON!



INTRODUCTION

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"Skillful programming has taken the superb graphics and addictive game play of the venerable arcade hit, and faithfully reproduced it on the home computer."

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[illegible]

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The Games machine

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If you've got something to say, this is that place to get it off your chest.



■ You too can create images like this. Find out how on page 75.

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All American... All action! The chaos of the Las Vegas Consumer Electronics Show is happening on a five-page special. Marshal M Rosenthal was there — and survived!



SUPER GRAFX UP FOR GRABS

Find out how you could win the latest smooth-looking, power-packed, ham-diezer of a console on page 22



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BOOT-UP

CASTLE MASTER



Welcome to the action! Go west with TGM as we take you to Las Vegas, USA where the world of computer action reveals its latest plans. It's the Consumer Electronics Show and Marshall M. Rosenthal reports on the future of computer entertainment. And guess what? It's awesome! To guide you through the cartridge jungle there's a special consoles feature which will help you pick the best machine around. After looking out west, get a taste of the east as Shintaro Kanazawa, our man in Japan, discovers three new PC Engine consoles. And TGM gives you the chance to win an amazing PC Engine II — the Super Grafx! It's all inside along with the latest games on all formats, tried and tested by TGM's panel of experts. Got ready to rock...

Freescape: It's back, back, back! Jump into an alternative reality in a totally new and well-stocked Freescape action-adventure called Castle Master, taking you to an English haunted castle in the 16th Century!

Set for release in April by Domark and created by Immersive Software, Castle Master looks like being even better than Immersive's first previous Freescape games: Dether, Dark Side and Total Eclipse.

Plunge yourself into the labyrinthine network of tunnels and rooms in a land to rescue a captured Prince/Princess (take you back to the usually equal days of 3-D Art Attack) from one of the castle's four towers.

Lurking around dark corners are demons, ghouls and spirits possessing many useful objects. Exploring the castle is vital — look out for minisaves, items and keys to open locked doors. And remember: it's hard out any scraps of food to keep your strength up.

You may have problems just getting into the castle! The drawbridge is shut, and if you can't discover a way to lower it you may be well pack up and go home!

The initial puzzles are fairly simple to unravel. But as you blow Demos into the east complex you'll have to keep your wits about you to solve each new problem.

But what if you're defenceless? You're armed with a sling and a bag of rocks! It's going to be tough job, and be sure to remember the way out!



Castle Master running as the design. Keep down in the next to passcast, any something, gives you a black hole. Sure it means the writer out of you, or what?



Get some freemage adventures in The Seattle base, you're expecting it's freemage show. You'll catch it in 3D, the you action in 3D, the you

Deep, deep, deep! There's no doubt, developed by Immersive Software and tested the quality and the amazing looking 3D!



KID GLOVES

Did Bomberman light your fuse? Did Rick Dangerous raid your last ark? If they did, Logotron have Kid Gloves, just the game for you. Five handy levels of platform action as Kid looks through the Ice Age, Egypt, American West Coast, Rain Forests and the Industrial Revolution! It's easy! It's certainly is, just take it to heart at the latest shot — watch with colour! Bouncing out for the BT and Amiga very soon.

Here to go! Kid and his gloves (back to the 3D)



ESCAPE AGAIN

It's Yengen's *Escape* from the Planet of the Robot Monsters, the happenin' science-fiction knockabout comedy game. Take Jake 'n' Duke through the wonderfully weird Planet X rescuing hostages and freeing Professor Sarah Bellum. And just to prove the Spacey is very much alive and well here are a couple of shots from the isometric smash!



COBRA TRIANGLE

Here's the next game from ace development team R.A.R.E., once better known as Ultimate! Cobra Triangle, an isometric, fast-paced racing game in a weapon-filled



speedway racing down narrow stretches of river, blasting other boats and collecting power-ups. Jump on the power deck and get ready to ride the ripples!

KONIX KICKS STIXS

In a shocking move successful joystick manufacturer Konix have relinquished the rights to its range of joysticks, which include the original Speed King and Navigator. Spectravideo have snapped up the rights to sell the sticks in the UK. Spectravideo also has the rights to the Stickjoy range (pictured). Konix's move is thought to be an odd one, selling the UK rights of the product which actually built the firm. Although Konix reckon they have a larger presence outside the UK — they should know, I suppose, it should also give Konix a chance to concentrate on the Multi System console now expected in, wait for it... return.



It's up and running! Space Harrier II (Sega), it's rather fast!

SPACE HARRIER II

Sega's frenetic futuristic mega-hit *Space Harrier II* is a nesting compilation from Quaxidom on all major formats. Our hero blazes himself high in the sky to-do battle with menacing hordes

of mutants causing much mayhem. Sure to wear out the fire-button on your joystick — especially when you meet the Dark Harrier, a very unpleasant shape if ever there was one.



F-16 COMBAT PILOT

Containing most of the thrills of the 1984 original, the Commodore 64 version of Digital Integration's blockbuster fighter flying simulation *F-16 Combat Pilot* should be in your shops now. Training as the pilot of a P-16 Fighting Falcon in several missions (including Scramble, Hammerhead, Deepstrike, Tankbuster and Watchtower) you can go on to take part in the full-blown multi-mission strategic campaign, Operations Campaign. Choose away, handle at 10 a'clock...



■ *F-16 Combat Pilot* has controls and instructions you learn like the latest equipment. Operators with little-to-no flying experience will find training and the Gunner target acquisition and attention modules while a fully loaded for night vision. What the tech tells the tale with that character console — it has a range of 10 miles! (Developer)



WINGS OF FURY

Ignition (chugga, chugga, chugga)... take off for Breakdown's combat flight game *Wings of Fury* on its way to ST, Amiga and PC owners. Your mission: to defend the bugs, but heavily short-up, aircraft carrier USS Wasp. Equip your plane, the Helicat, with tons of bombs and destroy anything that challenges you. Join in a dogfight, bomb enemy ships and destroy island bases as your contribution to the fall of World War II that's raging over the Pacific Ocean.



■ There are some rules under which you can't in *Wings of Fury*. But one that's more challenging set of missions and scenarios than the rest. The faster they get, the more the Helicat gets shot up, so back to back to the Wasp. Should you be able to land on its aircraft carrier, what, again, and take off each time into enemy ships.



NETHERWORLD

Cheap! Where's this? It's only *Netherworld* — a strange place and a positively strange game to look — finally making its appearance on the PC from Hudson in March. Flip around the maze-like galaxies collecting diamonds and kicking some alien ass.

CLOUD KINGDOMS



■ Cloud your way through the 32 different Cloud Kingdoms and don't miss the chance to play the game, and the... (Developer)

Googly eyes and rubber bottoms, ahoy! Yes, these rather strange Japanese-styled characters abound in this bounce around game out in March on ST, Amiga, PC and Commodore 64 from Logotron. In *Cloud Kingdoms* the action is viewed from above looking down onto bizarre kingdoms which float high above the parallel-scrolling

clouds. Flying around the 32 kingdoms collecting fuzzy pip and other assorted objects, while avoiding the pitfalls like blackholes and acid pools. Created by Dave Carter, author of Pinball's Gaud and Enlightenment, Logotron reckon this one'll beat Super Mario Bros in the addictivity stakes! Baaaaddding!



■ *Cloud Kingdoms*. It's funny, funny, funny, funny, but, but, but, but and the most wonderful thing about Cloud Kingdoms is that there's no jump screen. Um...

CYBERBALL

Rah! Rah! Rah! The Superbowl's the one night of the year you can sit around the telly scoffing popcorn, hot dogs, burgers, fries and all things American and not feel at all guilty because you're watching the climax of the USA's favourite sport! Being released almost simultaneously is Demark's cracking Tengen coin-op conversion of Cyberball: American Football 2022 AD. It's not like your normal game, though. This one's played by 20 feet tall megalithic robotic Pit two immense cyborg teams against each other, program them with a selection of offensive and defensive strategies and watch the shrapnel fly! With a ball made of 358 pounds of solid steel and high explosives this is a game no human can play — except you on all major computer formats 'round about now.



■ (Left) Robots, 2000 pounds in weight, 20 feet tall and eight feet wide, worth about £1,000,000, compete to place the Cyberball on the line. (Right) The game (left) was chosen by Mark and Sam, 200 pounds in weight, six feet tall, one and a half feet wide and worth about £1,000,000, against for another robot, possibly old.

CONSOLE KERRRAZZZZEEE!

The whole world is now definitely going potty over the console market. At America's Consumer Electronics Show (CES) in January heaps of information was announced. Take for example the Amiga console, which is believed to be a revamped A500 machine with — wait for it — a built-in CD-ROM system to run the games! But with an estimated price tag of at least £400 it isn't only a little high a price to pay for just a console. It's unlikely we'll hear anything more of this until the next CES in June.

Already a giant in the console wars, NEC, producer of the PC Engine and Super 32x, are lining up the details for its hand-held machine. Developed by two of the team responsible for Atari's Lynx, the system is lighter than Nintendo's Game Boy and features a three-inch colour

LCD screen, with the possibility of a cable to connect it to a standard TV. One of the main benefits will be the machine's ability to run current PC Engine software on the desktop console. The finished product is anticipated to be released at Christmas, priced at roughly £200.

The successful Sega Master System has done great guns over Christmas, 200,000 boxes, now here is Sega. And now Sega have opened the flood gates allowing software houses to develop games for the Master System themselves. The first software houses expected to go for the Sega are Grandstream, USA Gold and Yous. Funny enough Sega's UK distributors Virgin Mastertronic are still in negotiation with the Japanese firm. Ten new titles are expected by 1991 including Gauntlet, Paperboy, The

Realities, Fire 'n' Forget and Indiana Jones. In the autumn single Mastertronic will begin the official distribution of the 16-bit Sega machine, the Mega Drive. Bad news for current

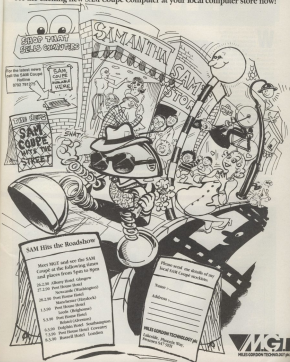
gritty-imported Mega Drive owners, none of the VM distributed games will run on their machine as they're being reconfigured for the GR. How Hare?



■ Here's NEC's PC Engine with CD-ROM — are Commodore really planning a Mega equivalent? Not just think, you need to playing PC Engine games on a real hard way now.

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TIME MACHINE

When you're a time traveler you're not supposed to muddle with history (as says the law according to Oz film), but when your time machine gets blown ten million years into the future and you're blown back to prehistoric times by a terrorist bomb, something has to be done!

So the stage is set for this new 4-D role-playing arcade adventure created by Vivid Image Developments. The objective is to get back to your own time, restore evolution, find the means to repair the time machine and prevent the terrorist explosion from happening.

The game is split over five different time zones, each creating the next when you completed the present objectives. Viewed in first-person perspective the scenery works as a horizontal flipscreen display with five screens to each level.

Backdrops, such as mountains, river, hills and the other topological features remain essentially the same for each time zone, so you're travelling in time and not a lot of



Changes to one zone may affect happenings in other time zones. With the time altering the scene set, a scene-it control changes will create the next zone to visit. Once the time has passed through a zone it will continue to appear independently. However, any changes to evolution posted by the modification of a completed zone can alter subsequent zones. Luckily, you're equipped with a beamer, a real time travelling device, allowing you to fly back and repair things.

THE YOKE'S ON SEGA

Get a grip on those flying games with the latest widget to plug into your Sega Master System — the thrillingly subtitled Handle Controller. It's an ergonomically designed steering wheel which should bring a new dimension to

Sega's exciting and flying simulations' according to the pre-release gossip. The add-on is compatible with existing titles Thunder Blasts, Out Run and Motorbike, and costs £29.95.



HOT ROD

Continuing their successful team-up with Sega, Activision are on the verge of releasing the hot seat-top racing game Hot Rod. Two player action abounds over thirty screens, filled with changing weather

conditions, tortuous tracks and automatic traps slowing you. And the better you do on a track, the more essential parts you can buy for your car to turn it into a real mean machine!





EA WINS

Electronic Arts' marvelous art package *Defence Force II* was the first-ever winner of *Computer's Entertainer* and *Visual Award*. The accolade is given to the program which best utilizes the features of the Amiga, and was awarded at the industry's award ceremony in December. The prize not only included a rather sweet trophy but £2000, half of which was automatically donated to the Royal Variety Club charity. Electronic Arts, being the generous sort, gave the other half to the charity too. Nice, eh? Publishers also won two awards — one for *Best Original Game of 1989* and the other for programming team Bullfrog who were dubbed *Programmers of the Year*.

IMPERIUM

Out in March from Electronic Arts is a nifty strategy game called *Imperium* (ST, Amiga, PC) which lets you focus on the development of human race from 2025 A.D. to 3025 A.D. Perhaps you could weight your way to become the last surviving emperor of the galaxy, manipulating economic, diplomatic, political and military factors. Anyone could rule the

world in *Imperium*. E.A.'s sophisticated strategy game. Designed by Matthew Giddey, an old dabhand at reimagining, and programmed by Nick Wilson — his first 16-bit product — with graphics by Karl Crowley who previously worked on the stunning space games for *The House of Mirth*.

Imperium — a barrel of laughs and no mistake, review next issue.



DRAGONS BREATH

Phooey! The only time you're likely to smell Dragon's breath is approximately three seconds before having your head bitten off. But in *Plasma Software's* latest you'll smell a lot of dragon's breath as you're breasting the bloodies.

Dragons Breath is a fantasy-combination strategy game where you

battle it out with three other players all attempting to gain supremacy. Send your specially bred dragons out into the world and conquer land. Then slap a pit too tight on the land, make hatchlings, buy yourself more dragons and increase your magical capabilities. Dig others out of the game and gain the secret of immortality. ST and Amiga owners beware!

TGM CHART THE GALILEO ALL-FORMATS TOP 40

- 1 *Fighting Forces*
- 2 *Chess IQ*
- 3 *Panther World Dizzy*
- 4 *Code Masters*
- 5 *Turbo Out Run*
- 6 *U2 Rattle*
- 7 *Super Boy*
- 8 *Exotic*
- 9 *Activision*
- 10 *Bernard — The Movie*
- 11 *Quinn*
- 12 *Quinn Super Soccer*
- 13 *Empire*
- 14 *Shedulers*
- 15 *Mastermind*
- 16 *Mastermind Dizzy*
- 17 *Mastermind*
- 18 *Mastermind*
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- 39 *Mastermind*
- 40 *Mastermind*



WHO'S THAT GIRL?

Just who was the female staring out of last issue's cover? She is the very charming Nikie Hemming of EAG, a distribution and marketing company which represents Rainbow Arts and Atari's ARC label. Much 'photocopying' and 'giggly-sounding' issued from the company since the production dept where Nikie Hemming boarded the TGM; yet, strangely enough, most bright red and didn't issue a squawk when we offered to introduce them to her. Pak, wings!



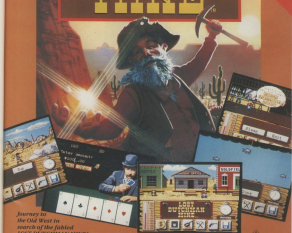
CORRESPOND!!

Do you live outside the UK? France, Germany or other parts of Europe, or even in Australia? If so, the good news TGM wants to hear from you as we invite you to write about computer entertainment happenings in your country. You must be able to read, write and speak English, obviously, and have a lot of information at your fingertips. If you reside (or if the best \$100 on a line with a lot about yourself and a sample piece of writing. Who knows, you could become one of TGM's all-time correspondent writers.

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GERRALOAD OF THIS!



1988 was supposed to be it, 1989 was getting to it and 1990 looks like being it. What are we on about? The year of the console, of course. There have been more announcements, more launches and more excitement about consoles over the past months so there's a feeling something is set to explode (and it's not Richard Eddy after eating a Shapla curry special). TGM looks at what the fuss is all about, while steering well clear of Eddy.

America and Japan have long been rivals by console level. Industry pundits believe the UK is long overdue for an invincible race of consoles. While many are fearing the home computer has had its day in the entertainment game, the footholders of the leisure market (arcade consoles) are about to go supernova.

Back in the heady days when the C64 and Spectrum were big names, there was always the threat of a new generation of super home computers just round the corner. Indeed, rumours about the Amiga and Atari ST were being floated as early as 1983. Now that the 16-bit machines are big news, the rumour mill has closed down. What are the last generation of super home computers going to beat? Sure, Atari and Commodore are going to continue upgrading their 16-bit machines, but just how exciting are 48000-based Amigas (M2000) and STs (1117) better graphics and better sound at what cost? £2000 plus? For something that's going to be used for entertainment the price is prohibitive.

Sadly so other manufacturers have even hinted at the possibility of a reasonably-priced next-generation home computer. Come to that, no glossy-proof machines have been mentioned either.

The home computer is by no means dead, and is likely never to die. However, the use for home machines is going to change. The trend has already started. Like it or not, the Spectrum, C64, Amstrad CPC, and other 16-bit machines are predominantly used for games playing. The current generation of 16-bit machines are used both for productivity and entertainment. Whatever comes next will have an even stronger leaning towards productivity. Eventually, perhaps, home computers will be used solely for running applications.

So what of entertainment? Is it dead? Far from it. Games players have been bombarded by a never-ending onslaught of tempting new game consoles. Some of those machines go far beyond the capabilities of any existing home computer, and even give certain arcade machines a run for their money.

Because home consoles pack such an almighty punch on the game-playing front — providing sensational sound, detailed and colourful graphics, addictive gameplay and often the ultimate gaming environment — and are much cheaper than their home computer cousins, there has been a mass migration of late towards these temples of temptation.

ACTION STATIONS

Why fight it? If you want the ultimate for playing games, you're going to need a console.

At present the Nintendo Entertainment System and Sega Master Systems are the sensations that are sweeping the nation. Although these two are only first machines, they have the advantage of absolutely enormous software libraries. In the States and Japan the number of titles is phenomenal. The reason being that the number of users is extraordinary. Nintendo, for instance, claims one in

every four households in the States owns a NES console.

Over here the ownership of Segas and Masterblasts is on the rise. A few months back, for the second time in the Gallup software threat history, a Sega game (Wonder Boy II) climbed high in the charts. Sega distributors, Virgin Masterblasts, are confident that around 200,000 machines are already in use in the UK.

Even though these machines are gaining a large following in this country, it's their 16-bit brethren that are causing excitement. The Sega Mega Drive, which is available only as a grey import at present, is currently top of the desirable charts. With its stunning audio visuals, the Mega Drive makes Amiga games look silly. And often leaves coin-ups looking overrated.

NES's PG (Engine) is another choice console — its compact size, huge number of titles and sophisticated hardware make it a firm favourite with game players. Sadly NES is doing nothing about importing it into Great Britain — it is, however, available from grey importers. The Engine is huge in Japan and has hundreds of games on tiny credit card-size cartridges. A CD-ROM unit is also available, around 50 titles are available on this silver medium. The Japs are so crazy for this machine that several versions in differing styles are available (see Our Man in Japan elsewhere in this issue).

Just available in this country is the Super Grafx, commonly called the PC Engine II, which provides more powerful graphics potential for games programmers. All existing Engine games are compatible with the Super Grafx. However, there's only one game specifically designed for it so far.

Atari and Nintendo almost transformed entertainment simultaneously with the introduction of the hand-held Atari Lynx and Nintendo Game Boy consoles. For portability pleasure these are unbeatable.

NEXT STAGE

So much for what's available, it's what's coming that will transform your perception of what's truly possible as far

as home entertainment games. There are no fewer than five consoles on the way.



■ There's colour in your hand. Atari's new Lynx is available at £149 by mail, a console of 4000 colours with a maximum 10 colours screen, stereo sound and — like the Game Boy — uses play-in cartridges.

Without doubt, the action over the next few years will be coming from the consoles.

Two more hand-helds are imminent: a colour version of the Game Boy and a portable PC engine. Little is known about the colour version of the Game Boy or when, and if, it will make an appeal—since the portable PC engine, now over, was on show at the recent CES in Las Vegas.

The new machine will, amazingly enough, run existing Engine games. It has a three-inch LCD screen, in-built speaker and is stereo headphone jack. NEC is to decide whether or not to include a video output which would allow the hand-held to be hooked up to a TV. Anticipated price is £199.

Much has been said about the Kona console and little seen of it. It has been hailed as the ultimate games machine, offering interactivity like you've never experienced before. What makes the Kona so unique is that it can be moulded into the shape that best suits the game you're playing. For instance, its control mechanism can simulate the steering wheel of a racing car, the yoke of an aeroplane or the handlebars of a motorbike.

Unlike other game consoles where software comes on some form of memory card, Kona's machine will accept disk-based software (originally planned at £14.99) into its 5.5-inch double-sided disk drive.

The Kona contains a very powerful 180-pin slab of silicon known as an ASIC (Application Specific Integrated Circuit). It looks after just about everything, including graphics and sound. Apart from the ASIC there's nothing else to get excited about there, not much. There's 256K of RAM and an 8086 processor clocked at 5MHz.

A special chair can be plugged into the C200 or so Kona which moves according with what's happening on-screen. In effect, the Kona brings a whole new era of game playing into the home—that of interactive stimulation.

Commodore too is getting in on the console frenzy that has taken Japan and America by storm (and looks like going the same over here) by announcing a CD-ROM based system due for release either late this year or early next year. All the moment there are no technical details on the machine, and it may well use existing Amiga technology.

Finally, the most exciting console to be announced so far: the 16-bit Nintendo or Super Famicom. The current 8-bit Nintendo can have 16 colours onscreen from a palette of 512. The Super Nintendo has a palette of 12 768 colours and can have up to 256 colours onscreen. Resolution is a crisp 512 pixels by 448. It's possible to have 128 sprites, up to 64 pixels square in size, onscreen simultaneously. Nintendo's coins and stations also add to the machine's incredible processing power.

The Super Famicom's official launch date is continuously being put back. Nintendo evidently want to get this machine right. Many would argue it is right now. However, expect it by the end of this year.

It's all very well having a sophisticated console, but hardware with little or no software is useless. Cover this page you'll discover the TGM guide to the best console software together with an indication of the number of titles available for each machine. ■



■ Nintendo's Super Famicom. The future of console entertainment. 16-bit colour sound synthesis, over 12 768 colours, very high resolution and powerful processing power. Just wait until the games arrive.



■ Sega's C200 console—injection with the moving chair, light gun and helicopter control mechanism—probably to revolutionise home entertainment. It's been hailed as the nearest thing to an interactive entertainment system. Nintendo's dominance including the 16-bit and 32-bit systems, Sega Images Development, Lightgun, Entertainment International and just about every long-term waiting in software to this machine. The delay is the console's launch may control console console development, many including its console work until they have longer experience of a console than from Kona. The machine was supposed to be released before Christmas, then just after the new year and now.



SEGA MASTER SYSTEM

Distributed by Virgin Mastertronic, the Sega is available from most chains and high street computer stores. Price starts around £80 for the basic system. The Sega is an 8-bit machine offering a palette of 64 colours, a resolution of 256 pixels by 192 pixels and three-channel mono sound. Hundreds of titles available for it.

NINTENDO ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM

For 19 Us and a selected range of high street chains sell the 8-bit Nintendo. Expected to pay around £150 for the system. Apart from Atari's VCS, the Nintendo is possibly the most basic console of the lot. This doesn't deter the Americans or Japanese who eat, breath and sleep Nintendo. Hundreds of software titles exist.

NINTENDO GAME BOY

Although Japan and America have been officially treated to the Game Boy, Nintendo is only to launch the hand-held in the run up to Christmas. It is available now, along with an ever-growing range of games, from real-order grey importers. You can pre-see your pals with a Game Boy for around £100.

ATARI VCS

One of the first consoles to appear — and is now showing its age considerably. You can pick up a system for around £50. Many high street chains are selling them off cheap as Atari gives others a VCS with every ST. A palette of 16 colours is offered, together with a resolution of 160 pixels by 192 pixels and three mono sound channels. Software is very hard to come by.

NEC PC ENGINE

Sadly, NEC has no intention of bringing this fine machine to the UK; grey importers like Microverdie can sell you a machine real or not. It's also possible to get the machine through some independent retailers, and Virgin Megastores and Manley's. Prices hover around £200. Although the engine has an 8-bit processor, it has incredible graphics and sound hardware. A palette of 512 colours is available. Resolution is 320 by 256 and six stereo sound channels are available. Lots of software is available, but most is in Japanese.

SEGA MEGA DRIVE

Virgin Drive is introducing this console around September of this year for around £200, but many grey importers are offering it now for the same price. It's undoubtedly the best games machine at present. It beats any home computer and consoles simply with its sheer processing power and sophisticated custom hardware. Only a handful of titles are available, but each is a monster classic.

NEC SUPER GRAFX

Another machine that is only available real or not. The Grafx is simply an enhanced PC engine. The console's name tells you what has been boosted: the graphics. Essentially the graphics chip makes it possible to move more things more quickly onscreen. It's not cheap at a few pounds over £180. Only one game shows off the Grafx's capabilities. However, all Engine games run perfectly.

WHERE TO GO, WHO TO SEE

Having difficulty getting hold of the latest releases for your machine? Here are the retailers you need to know...

PC Engine/Micromedia, (0743) 271792.
Turbo-Grads Superstore, (0832) 475151.
Sega Mega Drive Island, (0800) 600-146.
Nintendo Game Boy Telephones, (0800) 600-146.
Sega Master System/Vega International, (011) 7218678.
Acid Lynx Asia, (0750) 358444.
Nintendo Entertainment Systems, (0473) 225844.
Most of the above suppliers also handle other formats listed. Ping to find out the full range of coverage.

THE CARTS YA GOTTA GET

Life isn't worth living without the following console games. TGM comes clean and lists its fave coves.

MEGA DRIVE

The Super Shinobi — the best version of this game to have appeared. Classic one player hack-'em-up. Excellent graphics, silky smooth parallax scrolling, sensational sound, riveting gameplay. Yes, so many like this one.
Golden Axe — they player back and they game that is its goal as the second game. Fast, furious and fantastic. Lots of action and, not common in most games, turn-out. Beating the meat out of your opponents for your chest is hilarious.

Afterburn — one of the early Mega Drive games, and one of the best. Like the coin-up, the action is non-stop. One of two players can storm around a horizontally-scrolling screen, dueling up anything that gets in the way. And then there are the rest of level monsters...

NINTENDO

Life Force — better known as Salamander over here, Life Force is a tremendous one or two-player shoot-'em-up featuring three horizontal and three vertically scrolling levels. The graphics and gameplay are something else.

Super Mario Brothers II — the follow-up to the game that undoubtedly has done more for Nintendo sales than any other game. It's a huge platform-style hunt and kill game featuring countless levels, hidden secrets, monsters, bonuses and treasures. **Mega Man** — another huge game in which you must defeat an army of evil enemy bosses. There

are characters like Iceman, Etemon, Cutman, Bombman, Frenzy and Gulchman who will dish out their own style of vile death-dealing blow.

GAME BOY

Tetris — some of the best-held come with this game, but as it's so good it deserves a mention. Sliding line shape into others handy bricks, stimulating or exciting yet that is all. Tetris is so simple and so addictive.

Super Mario Land — the continuation of poor Mario's saga is as good as any other computer or console version. The formula may be getting old, but it's certainly not getting tired. Puzzles, monsters, traps, secret rooms and more. It's one helluva world to explore.

Alleyway — the last of Breakout clones is endless, but the game genre still doesn't lose its appeal. Alleyway provides you with a whole new range of interesting challenges. Besides bouncing a ball against brick and ball, you must contend with scrolling tiles, falling tiles and bonus screens.

PC ENGINE

R-Type — horizontal blasting action like you've never experienced before. Tremendous graphics, sound and gameplay combine to provide one of the most spectacular conversions of this coin-up classic. Huge end-of-level guardians, lots of levels and a non-stop onslaught of enemy stuff provide you with a very big challenge.

Galaga II — Probably the most memorable game of the first wave of Engine releases. It features classic

gameplay, brilliant sound, and loads of options. Waves of aliens teed-off down to you, while you must pick out which ones are dangerous and which could double the size (and frequency) of your ship. The most accessible console game around.
Wonder Boy II — Wonder Boy has always come off second best to Mario in the console stakes — till now. The CD-ROM version of the latest in the series is more arcade based than the Mario Bros games, and features the best computer game soundtrack around — an glorious compact disc, or cassette!

SEGA

Shinobi — of all the computer and console versions, this is the best conversion of the fantastic arcade game. Shuriken, samurai and other stuff to make any guy funny through twisted levels to rescue coos. Excellent gameplay.

Vigilante — yet again the best conversion of the coin-up makes an appearance on the Sega. The idea is to rescue your girlfriend, Maria, from street thugs. Numerous levels of chain-sliding fun are to be had as you battle all manner of gruesome opponents. The graphics are outstanding.

Wonder Boy III — fans of the arcade game will be disappointed to note that this version has nothing to do with the coin-up, apart, of course, for the name. Instead you must guide the lad with the pointy ears through various locations, searching for bits of



SPACE ROGUE

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THE ULTIMATE ENGINE EXPERIENCE

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

There was a young man from Japan
Who was a PC Engine fan
He liked games in space
Especially Battle Ace

FILL IN SCARFID MORE INFO ON THE PC ENGINE/SUPER GRAFX (PLEASE TICK BOX)

Rush off your entry to: SUPER GRAFX COMPO, TOM, PO Box 18, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. Closing date March 8.

We brought you the first stunning pictures of the PC Engine and now you've seen the latest Japanese games machine — the Super Grafx, the mindblowing PC Engine II. So who better to collaborate with than the first UK company to import the PC Engine, Shropshire-based Micromedia. Micromedia's version of the new NEC Super Grafx is so impressive (see page 82) that we're giving one away! This is undoubtedly one of the world's best consoles and here's how you can get your hands on it...

Scarfed around the page are screen shots of five white PC Engine games. Just identify each picture, placing your answers on the form below, fill in the tie-breaker (limerick), and send off the form to the usual address and you could be playing Japan's hottest machine very soon!

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REVIEW

My God! It's War!

It most certainly isn't TGM enters into battle with this month's crop of software and checks out what's hot and what's not. We take charge of a platoon in Ocean's *The Last Patrol* and discover the best of British are



beating America's *Greenware* at their own game. And rising high from Japan comes *The Super Shinobi*, ratty ninja action happening on Sega's Mega Drive. Guiding you through the software jungle this month are TGM's very own Star Players: Warren Lapworth (likes dressing up as a ninja — amongst other things, blabbing his way through *Radio One's Our Tune* every day), Mark Caswell (likes caffeine poisoning, picking fights with filing cabinets) and this month's guest reviewer is 'Stunning' Stuart Wynne (34-32-33, likes working with children — that's why he's editor of *ESAP*). Challenge the action!

Check this out! It's the new Star Player logo — when you see this you'll know the game concerned comes with TGM's utmost approval and should not be missed!

**TGM
STAR
PLAYER**

Mega Drive games supplied by HI Europe Imports
PC Engine games supplied by Microcabin and PC Engine Supplies

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INFOGRAMES SHOW THEIR METTLE

FULL METAL PLANETE

INFOGRAMES

The Full Metal Planete of the title has metal ore mining companies throughout the galaxy drilling at the thought of it. However, the first of this century may not last much longer, as in just 25 days the whole planet will be flooded. This is of the essence, as one of the top mining companies, Cobra Steel, has sent its very best people to grab as much ore as possible in the 25 days left before the big flood swamps everything.

Two to four players can take part in the scramble for valuable minerals, with the computer playing as many players as you want. Each player is assigned a flag, which you can design yourself with a built-in graphic ability.

Following flag selection the strategy screen appears, showing a map of the entire world, 57 by 25 hexagons. You must choose where to land your freighter, which cannot then take off until after turn 21 or 25. While landed you can control your units through the close-up screen — where all the attractive graphics are.

PUTTING ON THE HEX

The aim of the game is simply to have the most units of one and vehicles stored inside your freighter (and any captured freighters when you steal it).

Actual gameplay is divided into 25 turns (days). During every turn each player has 15 energy points and must use some or all of them within three minutes, the time limit for an individual's turn. Every action, from moving a boat one hex to turning one into a superlaser, costs points. Five or ten units of energy can be stored for use in the next turn.

Inside your freighter are Destroyers (attack boats), tanks, super tanks, and fixed turrets — your freighter has three of these. For these to destroy an enemy vehicle two of them must be within range of it. Normal



range is two hexes, but superlaser can reach three hexes — as can normal tanks on mountains.

In addition, if two destroyers get directly beside an enemy vehicle it can be captured, coming under your control. Moreover, destroyers can capture enemy freighters. If this happens that player is out of the game and you take over all his units.

There are also Transporters such as barges (which can carry four items across

water) and crabs (two items across land). Transporters can also pick up the vital loads of ore which are scattered across the world.

But probably the most important vehicle is the weather van (V). This amazing 'boat' can turn one into tanks, crabs, or pontoons (to bridge rivers). It can also (under the next tide — crucial as high tides can immobilise your land vehicles, while low tides do the same for ships).





BOARD GAME PLUS

Full Metal Planet is yet another boardgame conversion, but, rather than the usual simple (and commercial) type, it's a strategy game. That will put many gamers off, but easy-to-learn rules, a rapid-fire minute-to-minute and attractive presentation (including a free full-sized map!) can seduce even the most action-hungry person. Pop-up, icon-driven menus make all aspects of the game easily accessible and are much more fun than messing around with the lead pieces in the old boardgame!

While simple to understand, the rules make for some very challenging games — while the basic elements are easy to learn, the intricacies of combat and mining prove difficult to master. The computer players are tough and have their own varied strategies, but it's more amusing to battle it out with friends.

Full Metal Planet is a fine conversion of a well-designed board game and while strategy experts like our own Fred (Righty) Rigg, may find it a touch on the shallow side, it's perfect for those of you who are new to this type of game. If you always wanted to try strategy but were too afraid to ask, go for it. Now's the time to broaden your horizons.

Shaun Wynne

GAME FULL METAL PLANET

PRODUCER INFOGRAMES

VERSIONS

AMIGA	£24.99
ATARI ST	£24.99
PC	£24.99

AMIGA

85%

An average title sequence leads to a neatly presented game with useful options, particularly the flag designer — having your own banner in flight under helps you to become involved and identify with your forces. Graphics are nothing special but are detailed, authentic-looking and get you into the feel of things. The soundtrack is a weird but pleasing infra-bass-plus-good-musicals (at least in-game effects).

ATARI ST

85%

Apart from the mouse pointer — black instead of white — and getting a tiny bit less free in the intro, the ST game is identical to the Amiga one. The in-game sound FX and graphics are exactly the same, and the flag designer just as much fun. As with the Amiga game most of the options and functions are menu-driven, making it very easy to get into, but there are a few bugs which make reading the manual worthwhile. In conclusion, technically unimpressive, but very atmospheric and a million times better presented than most war games.

CHECKING OUT THE PICTURES



In this box (above), the map screen displays the firing zone of your units, while (far left), it reveals the precious white one. Bottom centre: checking on enemy units before you make your tactical move. Left centre: Iron Gate Motel blows an enemy boat full of the war. Right centre: Deploying units around your freighter base — full planning can ruin your chances of success. Top: Boom! The time to broaden your horizons.



Welcome to the House of Fun

DR PLUMMET'S HOUSE OF FLUX

Microstusions

Dr Plummet has been hailed a genius (and an evil madman) in one breath. One thing's for sure, he's a weird dude. His attire consists of purple-trimmed, flared trousers, yellow plastic jacket and wide psychedelic tie (man). And his actions are often as dubious as his dress sense.

He claims to have contacted aliens and constructed weapons for them, and then he tells the Earth that the aliens will invade in six months. Though, for a prize, he will help mankind defend themselves against impending invasion. Even after six peaceful months the governments of the world are still convinced that something will happen. There leaks out that Dr Plummet is working on a secret weapon called the Acme-Convert-A-Wep that would destroy the aliens once and for all.

But the Doc won't tell, so as a member of the Special Strike Force you must infiltrate the House of Flux and find the mad professor. On your way you must also pick up stranded pilots (six in each location) whose previously failed on the mission you're about to undertake.

As you board your ship, Plummet's Progress, you discover yourself with the thought that most of the ship's components were designed by the man himself. The engines (Plummet's Patented Zoom Rings) are capable of moving the ship at light speeds and converting immense gravitational pulls. The shielding system (Plummet's Reflector) will stop dead any laser bolt or bullet fired at you (though you'll lose a lot of fuel in the process).



Prepare yourself for the wildest trip of your life. There are 20 levels split into four missions (degrees of difficulty). The design of the game is very similar to the classic Atari. Using gravitational forces pull you in all directions. And even with 13 ships, the limited amount of fuel isn't enough. The alien forces are also after the Doc's invention, so alien gun turrets are scattered around the Doc's house.

Apart from the points scored from blasting aliens and collecting your charms, secret bonuses on the completion of a level can add to yours. One thing's for sure, though, this will be the trip of your life. Each screen layout is as crazy as the last. And each has a completely different gravitational pull. It's probably best to keep your eyes on the scenery and forget about the points.

Mark Goodall



Left: the evil Dr Plummet's face grins slyly from the background of the first level, where you're about to rescue an astronaut.

Above: the strange roller-coaster effect of level two is truly disconcerting.

Above right: the walls are as hard as they look!

Right: careful! Mind you don't cut these corners.

GAME ON, PLUMMET'S
HOUSE OF FLUX
PRODUCER
MICROILLUSIONS
VERSIONS
AMIGA £24.95

AMIGA

89%

Graphically, I've never seen anything this mind-warping (set in a legal state of mind). Some of the backdrops will leave those of a nervous disposition feeling for the sick bags. The game isn't recommended for those who easily suffer migraines. Some levels are visually overpowering, whilst others are so complicated or move at such a pace that you'll have trouble sleeping afterwards. The game will run on an A500 without any problems. However, those of you with a rife machine will get the equally-tasteful sounds that make the game even weirder. There are also numerous soundboards to keep the competitive fun lasting for many months. Totally recommended.



UPS WITH THE DOWNS

In the dim distant past the first two games in the arcades in feature professional form (and listed as a playing element were Lunar Lander and Space War. Both were included in many guides for the burgeoning Spectrum market. They were all pretty basic until 1986 when Derwent (Fleeted £1.99) appeared on the C64. Two years later this was followed by the disappointing Thrust 3. Probably the best of the lot was Odis. And now we've Dr Plummet's House of Flux — probably the hardest, most complicated and definitely weirdest of them.



Vengeance is mine!

VENDETTA

SYSTEM 3

GAME VENDETTA
PRODUCER SYSTEM 3
VERSIONS

SPECTRUM	£9.99/£14.99
C64	£9.99/£14.99
AMSTRAD	£9.99/£14.99
ATARI ST	£19.99
AMIGA	£24.95

C64

93%

Vendetta may be tough but it's certainly playable. It's not all about blowing up everything, though, requiring much planning and caution. There are numerous fantastic puzzles to solve and plenty of obstacles out to stop you. The new sections are much better than both Chase HQ and Our Man on the SS, with the locations having all the detail you'd expect of a Last Ninja game. There's also a great video sequence at the start, designed by Tony Hagar. Along with that the title tune's brief and in-game spot effects of a high standard.

out that's being kept almost a place. Annoyingly, this, although by a 10000-lapped bomb-jelly girl. One less move and it's dead fingers. On her release, though, there's no time to waste as you must dash off to the park where the toffs professor is being kept.

Vendetta contains an addictive mix of two game styles. A fairly decent real racing game and a similarly effective Last Ninja-type stage (haven't we seen enough of this from System 3, though?). As the time limit ticks away the action gets faster and more furious.

Mark Cassell



STAYS THE MAN

Alan Benham, the C64 programmer, started on games at the age of 14. He wrote two utility programs and an unreleased game for Bugt Byle, then went to Polaris where he wrote Cauldron 1 and 2 and Benhamer — The Ultimate Warrior before moving on to System 3, for which he has written Tracker and now Vendetta.



Death Adder is a mass butcher. Not of pigs of iron, but of people. A vicious and evil dictator who has kidnapped the king and his daughter. He has also executed various members of your family — which makes him very unpopular indeed.

With thoughts of revenge you (and a friend if you have any still alive) must tread a long and dangerous path. Adder's castle is in the mountains, through your kin and rescue the royal hostages. Under what guise



■ Stevie took my grapes, you snore, or I'll stick a spike in your head!

It's another Golden moment from...

GOLDEN AX

should you proceed? You have three to choose from: An Battler the Barbarian, Tyris Flame the Amazonian or Gilas Thunderhead the Dwarf — all have their own reasons for revenge. Any of the characters can, along with their specialist weapon, cast magic spells, which are obtained from small blue jugs (see box). The more jugs you possess, the stronger your spell will be.

You'll need all the magic you can muster

(inside) as you confront skeletons, ogres with large clubs, vicious female warriors and the obligatory level big guys.

Often attackers will appear on two-legged mounts. These are either fire-breathing dragons or a strange creature called Chicken Legs. Knock the sides off to gain the mounts, and more importantly a distinct advantage in battle.

The staggering array of moves you possess includes levitating holy beings, grain-crunching birds, and dragonfire throws. The trail to Death Adder's castle is

a long and tortuous one, you'll need to head all the magic and luck you can lay your hands on.

Golden Axe is originally from an arcade coin-op and contains all the features of the large original. You can play with one or two players.

Meru options will also allow you to alter the energy bars, listen to in-game sounds and alter the position of the button functions. Totally customizable and totally addictive — though not too original.

Mark Goodall

THE GOOD GUYS

An Battler (Height: 180cm, Weight: 80kg) A Barbarian whose mother was killed by Death Adder. His favourite weapon is the broadsword and though he isn't quite as nimble on his feet as Gilas or Tyris he's immensely strong. Magical weapons: explosions.

Tyris Flame (Height: 170cm, Weight: you don't ask a lady!) A proud Amazonian who saw her parents murdered by Mr Adder. Her weapon is also a sword, perhaps not quite as cunning as Gilas' who is very nimble. Magical weapons: fire.

Gilas Thunderhead (Height: 160cm, Weight: 80kg) A dwarf whose brother lost his life to the dark clatter. His puny size can often feel the sting as his skills can work more than compensate. Magical weapons: lightning.



■ Hey! The sky's supposed to fall on Chicken Legs; he's not supposed to fall from the sky onto you.

GAME GOLDEN AXE
PRODUCER SEGA
VERSIONS
SEGA MEGA DRIVE \$29.99

MEGA DRIVE

92%

This has to be the most addictive game this month — you're lucky there was plenty of time to write the review! The character sprites are all big and bold, with more than a rainbowful of colours. The pounding soundtrack only adds to the involving and exciting atmosphere of the game. Fast action, superb attention to detail in the fight techniques and some outstanding magical spells makes Golden Axe a must for all arcade action fans.

AXE
Sega

BAD DUDES

Dragons There are two types: the blue leather steeds of flame, the red spit fireballs.

Chicken Legs Strange two-legged creatures consist of a head and tail. It uses the latter to attack unwary foes. **Knickerbocker** A real barman character who thinks nothing of laying into his foes with his huge club.

Wraiths Shades of Jason and the Argonauts have with this unrelenting quest from the grave.

Zelevokas A marionette woman whose fighting prowess has impressed **Death Adder** so much he has allowed her and her sisters to shop up adventures with their boss.

Death Adder The bad guy himself. The man you love to hate. But does he work for himself, or does he just taking orders? Have you found the real boss?

Into the fray as a...

BATTLE ACE

HUDSON SOFT

GAME BATTLE ACE
PRODUCER HUDSON SOFT
VERSIONS
SUPER GRAFX \$29.99

SUPER GRAFX

75%

Plot explanations go right out of the window with this game. Out *Afterburner* and *Galaxy Force* fans will be familiar with the genre. You control one of the most top-of-the-line spaceship ever created.

Your mission is to patrol seven planets dispensing (killing they mean) any vicious craft who happens to "wander" into your airspace. You start on status armed with four 20mm cannons and twin homing missiles. Ammunition is unlimited, which is a good thing because you'll need every bit of weaponry to beat the invaders.

The nasty alien hordes attack without mercy in a wide selection of imaginative looking craft. The best tactic is to take 'em out when they are specks in the distance. Looking at the missiles is simple, just jiggle the control button around until red circles appear; you can then let 'em go. Though the cannon can be used for close-up work, but wait!-out for the missiles that are slung out by the planes.

It's not just the fly boys who attack you, there are all sorts of obstacles, too, intended to prevent your progress: lightning, asteroids, point-swapping tunnels. If you survive to the end of a level you must face the mother ship.

Much effort, skill, planning, strategy—and a blow-by-blow destructive nature soon blow them to the seventh atmosphere. Each level contains its own special master ship, requiring a different technique from the last. As each the game addition lasts for ages.

Warren Lapworth

Lightning strikes off around in a terrifying display of power! As you blast your way through everything Hudson Soft can throw your way!

Battle Ace has all the makings of a great arcade game: it's tough, fast and the attention to detail is painstaking. If like me, you love *Afterburner* you'll soon get back into the chair. My only two slight niggles are the death sequence which is far too long, and the massive software bug when a missile is launched, often obscuring the enemy. The Super Grafx will no doubt take all in this country if this game is anything to go by. Although it isn't a buy the machines' game like *Star Wars* and *Dark (Rocksteady)* was.



FOR A FULL REVIEW OF THE NEW PC ENGINE SUPER GRAFX, CHECK OUT PAGE 42 NOW!



Looking for...

THE LOST PATROL

Ocean

The year is 1968. The location is South Vietnam. You are Sergeant Weaver, head of a platoon of elite soldiers on their way back into action. Unfortunately, your platoon is knocked out by an enemy attack, and you and the remaining six survivors must now pool resources and make it safely to your objective. As leader, you must guide your fellow survivors — (Iron, MacGraw, Cain, Moses, Gomez and Cass) — through 50 miles of hostile territory, with just enough food to last two days and no way of contacting help. All you have is a map, which warns of Viet Cong troops and villages, and the individual attributes of each member of your team.

Their differing skills, morale, and strengths, can be called up from the Menus screen, along with damage. As you go through the game, the soldiers will sustain injuries ranging from minor cuts and bruises to bullet wounds and sometimes death. You can also designate a man to head the march (usually Cass) and scouts that can reveal the area ahead of you.

As you march along the terrain, the status screen displays what is happening around you. You can control the speed of your march with a push-down menu, but it is still restricted by the type of terrain you are in. (For instance, you progress slowly in the jungle.) You can move with extreme caution, march at normal speed or go



all that faster — their down time when I don't know where they could have gone. It's all over-built Larry for turning them out — they were all contained before. Now we have a lot of them — then it's a disaster. You can see the first, see the rest of the guys will go right.

along randomly.

If you're on the edge the gods are on your side, you've a couple of lucky traps that could welcome them to your side. For the small take-out place a few grenades or for more destruction and a Claymore mine.





It isn't just the color. Green, even so, is a little yellow-green now. Some grasses — in fact there is some — are going to have you. Grasses? What are you? You're there, aren't you? For all that, they're not... only the good guys. Should there be some more here? Should there be? Well, it's not a bad idea, but you can get your direction right.

These players' contributions sort out around 120 steel pellets in a wide area and are capable of wiping out entire platoons.

Artillery and grenades are limited, so taking to villages and creating information out of them is vital for progress. There are

five types of interrogation, from stand Questioning (leading up the line) to simple asking (without the threat). If you really think they're hiding something, then shoot one of the bystanders and research the area. This usually throws up a tunnel or two.

Due to the small amount of nations, food is a major consideration. The amount handed out can be controlled — normal, half or starvation rations — to keep your team just going along or storing up energy for later. And your team won't be too happy if they don't get any rest — or even a sleep.

It's not all boring strategy and thinking around. Five arcade sequences add a pleasant change to the rigors of war — and keep you on your toes. Often — too often! — you can't cross a minefield

GAME THE LOST PATROL

PRODUCER OCEAN

VERSIONS

AMIGA £24.99

AMIGA

85%

If you're expecting a violent action game, like so many of Ocean's war releases, then forget it. This is one of the more broad of Ocean products. Following on from *U-25 Rehearsal*, *The Lost Patrol* tells very simply about the strategy involved. Still, action there will have their hands full when it comes to dealing with the goons. Despite the numerous game features and platoon attributes, the in-game action is kept to a minimum.

The Amiga version contains 3D intervention pictures, filling in between the main action on the movement map. Of these, too are animated with the odd digitized character adding atmosphere (the goons are taken from the movie *Platoon* if you're wondering). It's fairly obvious where the initial inspiration for *The Lost Patrol* came from, but Ocean have produced a game as good as *Chatterbox* and it came from the Desert on their first outing into the rarely trodden territory.

which must be mowed across. You can snipe at suspicious tanks as you cross, but the dip and BOOOOOOO!

Another action sequence pits down your men with up to three machine gun nests. Someone has to sneak up and take some grenades, so choose your men carefully. As you control this, watch for muzzle flashes, pin point them, pull the pin from the grenade and throw it at the offending enemy.

A third arcade scene tests your visual scanning skills as you 'U-25' gunning other armies or supplies. You challenge him in a man-to-man fight with his (not making the guy has a degree in mental arts).

One action sequence pits behind a wall hiding from a platoon of goons. So CAREFULLY pop up and fire a few rounds or throw a grenade. Get back down quickly, though, or you may find yourself with a very unpleasant centre parting (straight through your head).

The final action segment places you on the edge of a village. Several towers are taking pot shots at you from the windows of the houses, so again watch for the muzzle flashes and pick them off. Some of the enemy are great shots, while other watch all over the place, and would have trouble hitting a traffic jam on the M25.

Of course, you may never see some of these sequences. They only occur when certain situations arise.

However, I can guarantee, you're bound to come across the Viet Cong somewhere in the game. And when you do, you'll know it.

Mark Goodall



IT SHOULDN'T HAPPEN TO A VET

With the average age of a soldier in Vietnam only 19, no war has ever created as much controversy. Movies will deny now that the Americans made many mistakes, but, subtle enough, it is the Americans who have been slipping up the war ever since. Wallowing in self-pity, perhaps? It is hard for us to like to comprehend.

The Iron Triangle they called it, miles of dense jungle, in which the Viet Cong lived and were used to. The Americans encountered situations they had never seen before. Indeed, a manual was published that explained jungle warfare, they were just not prepared for the dense terrain or an enemy that appeared and disappeared like lightning.

The Yanks learned several valuable lessons: short hair cuts were a bad move because sweat got in the eyes, leather boots disintegrated within days because of the colossal heat and humidity, and grenades could be lethal to those carrying them. Grenades were carried on the outside of the soldier's pack and on several occasions a branch snagged the pin and set off an explosion. Also, because of the dense foliage and trees a throw grenade bounced back.

Around 80% of the casualties of the whole Vietnam conflict were caused by booby traps. The Viet Cong were experts at setting them and in such underground wars virtually invisible to detection.

It is only recently that the Americans have come to terms with their loss. Despite such eye-opening films as *Apocalypse Now* and *The Deer Hunter*, it was only with Oliver Stone's *Platoon* that the Vietnam story was accepted by the whole world. Soon after, it was followed by a spate of similar genre films, probably the most startling being Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket*. And it doesn't stop there. This year you can see *Tom Cruise* in there on the Fourth of July, the story of a crippled Navy vet and his personal battle towards world peace. Like Stone's previous film, *Platoon*, *Fourth of July* is being heralded as the film of the year.



AICORP CORPORATION

Like most people, my knowledge of basketball doesn't go much further than the motion *Glossary* and *Team* stuff. And if you're unfamiliar even with those, I give up! Okay, I'm a sympathetic guy. Basketball is a sport where two guys (or six guys) toss and bounce a ball around a rectangular play area (the court) trying to throw the ball through a hoop (the basket). Hard isn't it?

If you're lucky enough to own a multi-tap copy of this, you can play against a friend, but if you can't, a friend into playing — like me — you're more likely to be delirious against the console. Choosing a team from the eight available: — Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, Seattle, Honolulu, Miami, Boston and Dallas — is a ray of sunshine (involving all eight teams) or maybe can be entered, or a one-of-a-kind

player jump, ready to shoot, and a second game actually makes the shot.

For incidents around the basket (bounces in the back as a lay-up and dunk), the view switches to a close-up. If it's to the benefit of your team, you have to press button one as a marker moves across the red section of a colored bar.

Substitutions can be made and two-player changes made under the time restrictions of a time-out.

For team sports, football games are prevalent on computers, basketball games are almost as popular on consoles. Basketball isn't, have always taken third position but this conversion of the sport should do something to change that. As is the case with most console games, there's high quality presentation and plenty of attention to detail, which leads the player smoothly into the game.

Gameplay is by no means perfect, but for team games are always awkward to get into and difficult to master.

Playability gradually comes stirring through, although excitement never fully develops, mainly due to blocking and

GAME USA PRO
BASKETBALL
PRODUCER AICORP
CORPORATION
VERSIONS

PC ENGINE

\$29.95

PC ENGINE

81%

Most in-game graphics are a little weak. Colors are lacking and the sprites are cartoonish with ugly deferred heads (like most Japanese drawings, in fact). They're thick and blockily outlined in black and simply animated. Scrolling is inconsistent but close-up graphics of basket action are excellent drawn and are highly effective, despite few frames of animation. Music is lively and fun but effects are simple noises.

BASKETS BONANZA

The tricks of the trade apply to the console version as much as to the real game. Try to find a really high chair to stand on while playing. This will give you that all-important height advantage over the competition. Nah, just kidding.

Master dunking before any other aspects of the game. Once the opponents have scored, or you've intercepted them, get the ball out of defense as quickly as possible (a fast break). This allows most of the baskets to be scored through dunks — i.e., a certain few points. If time's running out a small beeper sounds. On hearing this try a shot at the basket, no matter where you are. There's always a chance that it could go in, and if it does you're probably got three points (if you're shooting outside of the offensive "D").

defense being almost uncontrollable: if the opposition gets into a good shooting position they're guaranteed to score.

But still, amongst PC Engine games and particularly fans of team sports, *USA Pro Basketball* is bound to score.

Warren Lapworth



tion match played. Five players are chosen from your squad of 12, using numeric statistics as a guide and their positions and tactics (zone, man-to-man or both) set.

Game control is relatively simple. The floating player is the one under control but can be changed by pressing fire. When in possession, button one passes to the nearest player or in the direction the player's facing field (towards a player on your side would be useful). Button two makes the

The Japanese cartoon-like sprites are typically ugly characters with deferred heads, thick and blockily outlined in black and simply animated, but the game overcomes their shortcomings.



Hey, Hey, Hey, it's...

THE SUPER SHIN



The Zeeb Corporation—once upon a time was the most feared crime syndicate in the world, but their plans were thwarted by the power of death wishes to Shinobi Master, Joe Musashi. They vowed to return, however, three years later, the Neo Zeeb has appeared, more powerful than ever before and out for vengeance. All who hold the power of death must die.

Not content with first killing Joe's right-hand man they have also kidnapped his trusty companion's wife. So it's time to get on your fighting feet and jump into action, wipe out the Neo Zeeb and rescue the widow Muraki.

Joe starts off with a useful array of weapons, from a limited amount of pony dustbin to a razor sharp sword — as well



Shinobi from top left.

■ The little screen from Super Shinobi's latest stage isn't too big.

■ Mind your back, folks. Joe Musashi gets ready for more enemies as he battles with some ninjas.

■ Still stuck on the first level? Don't mind, get cheating from here.

■ Only 300 breathing ninjas left? Well, you'll get using that razor sharp sword, but for now, you're only five of those left.



as these 16 martial arts skill is world-renowned. Extra weapons (like fireballs, lives and power-ups) can be found in cages. Along with these you can call on four ninja spirits: Kageki, Kame, Purple and Miji (see box). And if all else fails you can always consult to the top of the screen and spray the enemy with concussive daggers.

As Joe battles his way through the nine levels that make up The Super Shinobi he meets many foes. Most notably, the Samurai warrior responsible in their armor, runs who appear to be quite harmless until they cast their blades, and even Batman and Spider-Man later on.

As if superheros weren't enough, there are many obstacles along the way. Traps and pitfalls include random spikes to stab at you, laser's trying their best to fry you and booby-trapped crates. Any hit will reduce your energy bar, and even with time lives the game will take hours to master.

Needless to say, the end of each level contains a grotesque gang leader. Shinobi

SHINOBI

SEGA

GAME THE SUPER SHINOBI

PRODUCER SEGA

VERSIONS

MEGA DRIVE

\$29.99

MEGA DRIVE

88%

Golden Age was impressive and *The Super Shinobi* is just as good. It's a long time since I've seen this sort of attention to detail in a game. The sprites have to be seen to be believed, especially some of the loyal guardians, dressed in just as impressive, with a dozen or so soundtracks that most push the Mega Drive's sound chip to the limit. And don't stop. Oh yeah, this is just another oriental bash-'em-up'. I wasn't you *The Super Shinobi* is worth every penny of the asking price.

players will do well to save up their lives powers for the combatants.

Although basically a continuation of the old coin-op genre, the *Super Shinobi* is a totally polished game. Five-game features include a 'Sound Test' (you throw and hear the engine tones), difficulty levels, the number of throwing stars available (lots of pockets?), and the configuration of the buttons for range, magic, light and jump. What else could you ask for?

Mark Cawson

POWER TO THE NINJA

Joe Musashi holds four mystical ninja powers.

JINJI OF HURUUCHI — surrounds our hero with a mystical energy force for a short time. Acts as a sort of shield.
JINJI OF KARU — allowing this action causes five pillars of fire to erupt from the ground. Particularly good for eliminating enemies.

JINJI OF FUSHI — some levels require you to leap quite ridiculous heights, but with this mystical power Joe can leap skyscrapers with single leaped (well not really, but you get the idea).

JINJI OF MUN — use this action as a last resort as it causes Joe to commit ritual suicide (ie, he explodes taking all enemy troops with him). Spectacular but it costs you a life.

Ever wished the Red Arrows? Wished you were such a skilled pilot, flying in tight formation and taking blue smoke? Adored by the public, test your flying skills in *Blue Angels*. Well tough. You can't be a Red Arrow with this program. Not at all. Instead, you're a Blue Angel, one of the six pilots in the USN's equivalent formation flying team.

Being an fully-fledged Angel requires much experience and practice so you've a long way to go before you can put on your own stripes. The first step is to visit a display and see a team in action. You can watch a high line or flat display (they each use different sequences of manoeuvres) from the stands, a balloon or a video screen. (Like any of the games sections, the amount of scenery and plane detail can be altered to change appearance and speed. Speed can be directly changed to run the program at half or quarter speed.

Your appetite duly whetted, head for a simulator. A wireframe cube, which may be

Reach for the skies

BLUE ANGELS

ACCOLADE

C64

83%

rotated in any direction, maps out manoeuvres with striped lines to give an idea of what moves, such as catty tail and vortex, actually look like. Displays are wireframe 3-D when simulated, with flashing squares marking the correct flight path, and autopilot showing how it's done. Displays tell you what to do next and how far you are from ideal position. On completion you are told the amount of error, your path and the correct flight path, and are given the option of trying again.

When your willing to risk life and limb — and a few million dollars of aircraft — it's time to practice in manoeuvre in reality. This is the where the simulator except with a proper landscape and jet giant, flashing cockpit. With all the moves, indeed you can then perform your own airshow.



The C64 version of *Blue Angels* (above) illustrates the playability and challenge of the PC version whilst staying within the constraints of the host computer.

Start plane games and simulators aren't common, in fact, the only one we can think of that fits the bill is Chuck Yeager's *Flight Trainer* (with the possible addition of MicroPro's *Aviator*). While that Electronic Arts release used landscape features such as bridges as part of its stunts, *Blue Angels* has a much wider range of manoeuvres to be learnt and more thoughtless, fun-friendly practice facilities.

As for formation flying, that's completely new to computer and extends the challenge and intensity of gameplay.

Performing a move accurately is tough enough but doing it in correct relation to five other planes requires real experience.

Being just the pilot of only one plane is a given of an adds variety to it all learn one manoeuvre and use it one position then you've still got five other flight positions to learn for the very same move.

For a flight sim without the endless violence of Russian bombing and dogfights against MIGs, *Blue Angels* is a very well thought out and very refreshing release.

In Search of Spock

STAR TREK

THE FINAL FRONTIER

Minda-Darrah

After going back in time to bring a whale to the future in *Star Trek IV*, the crew of the *Enterprise* were brought to trial for contravention of Federation law (one being the destruction of the original *Enterprise*). But after a generous court martial Kirk's rank was restored to Captain and he received what he had wanted for years, a command post on the new *Enterprise*. An uneasy peace treaty stands between the Federation and Klingons, but the tenacity of Kirk's trial angers them immensely and the relationship is in danger of crumbling.

As James Tiberius Kirk at the head of his ship, you must respond to a priority seven distress call received from the small outpost of Nimbus II, where previously, it is believed, have taken the Romans, Federation and Klingon control hostage. But upon arrival you discover that a renegade Vulcan called Spock has used his mystical powers to turn the consulate to his cause, the search for the planet of Eden, Shaka Ra.

It is at this point that you start your trip, on the *Enterprise* under the

command of Spock, go to normal readiness.



control of Spock, on his way to the center of the Universe. Unfortunately for you, the Klingons have been monitoring your communications and are on your tail. Partly to investigate the

situation, partly to kill or capture Kirk and partly to avoid his the treachery for the taking of their vessel. At the heart of the Klingon ship is Commander Klingon, a man with a deep-

THAT'S ILLOGICAL

Star Trek isn't as big in the UK as its stardom of yore, the States. But you won't go far without bumping into a crowd of Trekkies. It started with Gene Roddenberry's *Star Trek* TV series. And after many repeats, was followed in 1979 by *Star Trek — The Motion Picture* (the first of five). Roddenberry's first story was *The Cage*, later to be turned into a rare, two-part *Star Trek* story called *The Menagerie*.

The series ran 1966-1969, with 79 episodes in all, and many of them on a very tight budget. Money was always a big problem for sci-fi programmes — especially *Star Trek*. Big scenery shots always proved difficult. The bridge of the *Enterprise* was always available and for location shots they would always visit somewhere like a disused quarry. But sometimes the script called for huge cities or interstellar scenes, so matte paintings were created to make and meet no backdrops.

And who could forget the immortal catchphrases that were created around the *Enterprise*. "He's dead, Jim." "It's illogical, Captain." "We'll never ask it Captain". And a personal favourite "Live long and prosper".

Star Trek never lives on with a sixth film planned, and a continue in the spirit of numerous *Trek* conventions.



GAME STAR TREK V PRODUCER MINDSCAPE VERSIONS

ATARI ST	£24.99
AMIGA	£24.99
PC	£24.99

PC

85%

Trekkies have it all here. Great game and great graphics (even digitized pictures of all the crew). Although *Star Trek V* tries to be one of the many games spanning both strategy and action, I felt the latter was very much in evidence. And though Kirk isn't supposed to steer the *Enterprise*, when I did reach them I took great delight in looking at the photon torpedoes and blowing away. On shooting, though, sound was a bit feeble: although there are some interesting effects inside the ship, if you've always wanted to be at the helm of the *Enterprise*, you couldn't really fault Mindscape's attempt. And, let's face it, it's solar systems better than the film.

KV

United helped for the *Federations* war, in particular, Kirk.

Back on the bridge of the *Enterprise*, you are sitting in the captain's chair — feels good to be back — surveying the view screen. Around the display are various gauges that tell you the state of your ship: curved and numerous engine power, velocity and acceleration meters. Below them the navigational heading, the sensory read out and total power

gauges (don't push em, Cap'n). Also, essential for warp speed, is the dilithium crystal level and, finally, the power gauge.

The total gauge indicates phaser power, shield power, engine power, life support power and average power usage. All of the gauges need constant attention — especially in battle.

At the desk you can contact Spock, Dr McCoy, Ilia, Chekov, Uhura and Neelix. Each character appears along with a lot of appropriate actions (or simply for the engines. Uhura for communications).

To get anywhere warp speed is needed, but at the start of the game your ship is very low on power: it is through that dilithium crystals can be

found in 'wormholes'. These holes can be found throughout the galaxy. Carefully plan and pick up some crystals and get onto them — simple.

And that is your mission. Just. Watch Kirk before the Klingons do. What will he prove? Will you find the Supreme Being? Get going, there's no time to waste.

Mark Cawthra



TOWER OF BABEL

RAINBIRD

After the Great Flood (y'know — Noah, the ark, hey-by-two and the dove — that sort of thing), the Babel people gathered in Shinar, at the south of the Tigris/Mesopotamian valley in Babylonia. There they built a huge tower, the Tower of Babel (surprise, surprise), reaching high up into the clouds. However, they would have preferred it to reach the heavens; it was constructed so that mortals could drink to its summit and there communicate with God.

Needless to say, they didn't have much luck in having a chin-wag with the Big G (after all, he is an extremely busy deity), but they did attract some aliens, just passing on the way back from shopping. The aliens were the very rare and special kind — nice ones. They featured down three spider-like robots to subdue the humans and help them with the tower.

Although most humans fled from the spiders, those who stayed benefited from their knowledge, and men and machines reached perfect harmony (but it was a doomed relationship). The spider robots became homesick and tried to return to their world by summoning a spacecraft from the top of the tower. This angered the humans and, using the technology taught to them by the spiders, filed the tower's levels with traps and various robots to prevent them from leaving.

This is where you enter the scene. The spiders must quickly make their way to the top of the tower or else their alien masters will return to Earth, and this time they'll be in a very bad mood.

The tower is divided into many sub-sections, of between one and four floors and arranged in groups of nine. The first three towers are instantly accessible and then, when a tower is completed, any tower adjacent to it may be attempted. When at least seven of the nine towers in completed the

next group of nine can be attempted.

Each tower is displayed in tiled 3-D and can be viewed from one of many angles; the eyes of a spider, from near a spider (view position adjustable) and from one of four cameras, which can be panned and zoomed in on a section of the tower. You have three types of spider robot under your control — Zapper, Pusher and Grabber — but on some towers they aren't all available. Each tower has a task of collecting a number of diamonds (the spiders' power source) and/or shooting a number of enemy robots, but this is complicated by various level features and the enemy robots themselves (see below).

Logically, as the spiders are robots, you can program them. Each spider can have its own program of eight moves and all three can be run at once, or just one, leaving you to manually guide another spider.

If the built-in brains aren't enough, there's a construction option. A plan view is used to put out the different robots and features, and a password system prevents it from being re-loaded into the bit and tampered with by inquisitive hands (or meddling enemies).

Pete Cooke has been around the computer industry for some years now, best known for 3-D arcade adventures like *Cast*, and has chosen to make his programming re-appearance in this fashion. Filled with fun are no surprise from Pete and, as ever, an apt use for his parlaying high-tech constructions and devices.

The puzzles are not to be sneezed at. They're pretty straightforward at first but soon become challenging, and then even more difficult. The towers may all be made up from the same simple elements and have identical aims but their combinations make for much headscratching, using the many viewpoints to survey the scene in an



■ Pete Cooke's 3-D Babel is a 3-D game with a decent plot and several interesting sub-plots. It will certainly entertain you. Plan the robots to reach the top of the tower, a task set by the Spider.

often said attempt to work out the sequence of events. When sequences of moves have to be programmed it pays to be very careful — you have to work out the consequences of each move without actually seeing it — and when two (or more) spiders have to be used at once you need great concentration, and few pairs of eyes!

If the built-in towers prove too much or you want to torture your friends, the construction kit proves itself as a very useful, easy-to-use utility, and the password system is a very good idea. Obviously, it can also be used against the number of towers but this may not be required. Tower Of Babel becomes awesome after playing too many levels and once you've solved a

SERIOUS OBJECTIONS

Proximity mine Explodes if anything moves onto an adjacent square to it — highly dangerous.

Time bomb Explodes after a delay preset by the player and is as destructive as a mine.

Block Obstructive and indestructible block Pushable — very useful for defence against enemy Zappers.

Glass Block Pushable and instantly reflects a laser beam — also good for making out how Zappers.

Power Deflects a laser beam through 90 degrees, pushable.

Flag Just gets in the way — Zap it if you're trigger-happy.

Beamwriter Firing into it changes a laser beam into a repelling broader beam, or vice versa.

Parade up If fired on by Grabber, causes all unoccupied lifts to go up.

Parade down Similarly causes lifts to go down.

Preparer If fired on by Grabber, freezes everything except the spiders.

Wipe Also activated by Grabber, it removes all unoccupied squares from the four main compass directions — just!

Exchanger If Grabber fires at it, they exchange places and the Exchanger explodes.



■ From again it's the mighty Spider that must lead the way, using its shooting/tracker beam to gather the essential power-giving diamonds. The collected one to go, the rest are down to you.

GAME TOWER OF BABEL PRODUCER RAINBIRD

VERSIONS

AMIGA	£24.99
ATARI ST	£24.99

ATARI ST

81%

A clean, high-tech control panel surrounds the action screen (although the alternative control panel looks grotty), which, while using lots of bright colours, shows effective futuristic landscapes from whichever viewing angle you choose. To make the landscape more interesting you can even choose to have lightning, moving planets and comets in the night sky. 3-D movement is smooth, if not particularly fast, and the spiders move in an amusing and realistic manner. Sound effects are ordinary but functional.

TOWER ENEMIES

Zapper This is the hostile form of Zapper, a deadly laser cannon which can either fire in a fixed direction or while rotating, depending on the type. **Pusher** Another nasty nemesis, it repels anything in its path and can be fired or rotating.

Worm Just gets in the way. Cannot be destroyed but is Pushable.

Watcher A very calm robot it simply observes the Tower and can't be destroyed or moved.

Repper Bounces around like a mad thing and irritates — perfect for Zapping.

Lined **Lizard** **UnZappable**. UnPushable, and sets the floor if an object in its path forces it to change direction.

THE SPIDERS FROM MARS

ZAPPER Most dynamic, this spider has a built-in laser cannon which can destroy most enemies and objects. It can also take out the other two spiders, so be careful out there.

PUSHER Most unsuitable of the team, it's empowered with a tractor beam which pushes away anything movable it approaches.

GRABBER Friendliest of the threearms, it has a tractor used to collect kibbles and to activate tower devices such as Force Ups and Downers, Freezers, Wipers and Exchangers.

tower its challenge disappears.

Tower Of Babel is a well-designed, original and playable puzzle game but, like many puzzle games, won't appeal to all. Think carefully before buying but make sure you do consider buying it.

Warren Lapworth

And! There! He goes!

INDIANAPOLIS 500

The famous Indy 500 race is now fully recreated on a computer for your enjoyment. 200 laps of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway track in the way of you becoming champion.

The basic car you drive must conform with the Indy 500 standards but within those you can choose your pitlane team from Mardy/Cassworth, Lola/Buck and Penske/Cheroot.

There are eight different types of adjustment that may be made to alter the performance of your chosen car. The front and rear wings of the vehicle affect the drag and downforce force exerted on it. The comparison of tyres has an effect on the speed and handling of the car so you have a choice of soft, medium or hard ones, and, so there's only left turns on the track, the difference in size of the left and right tyres is important. Acceleration depends upon gear ratios and fuel/boosters, and anti-roll bars change handling and responsiveness.

You can practise before taking a qualifying lap then a proper race, of ten, 30, 60 or the full 200 laps. Entering the pits lets you change team line, retul or adjust the cars performance, but whilst valuable time. Crashes are inevitable and they're a good time to use the replay option, which shows the last 20 seconds of racing from one of six viewpoints.

Indianapolis 500 really shows you how first-person racing games should be done. We thought we took it all with Race and Test Drive II but Indy combines a fully adjustable vehicle with fast, realistic and involving action.

It's a tough race all the way keeping the car facing the right way is tricky enough. Skids are especially easy to fall into, particularly after an often unavoidable trip across the grass, and the right-hand side of your car often gets all the paint scraped off it from lapping the outer edge of the track a little too closely indeed, staying squarely in the middle of the track is something you

won't be able to do without a lot of practice — unless you're hovering at less than 40 mph.

In short, if you want challenging arcade-like racing and aren't fazed about tracks only having the Indianapolis 500 Indy 500 only real fault, go for the Electronic Art's chequered flag!

Warren Lapworth

Warren Watcher said there would be days like this. The 3-D effect is truly 3-D and realistic — even on a mere PC — but you're likely to see the wheels spinning by rather than the wheel's chequered flag.



DAMOCLES MERCENARY 2

NOVAGEN

A long time, it's been, in fact just over four years, since the revolutionary delivery method seen on the Commodore finally escaped from Tieg and returned at your original destination, here, the PC, played in the Gamma color system.

This is the jewel of the system, but within a few hours this jewel is going to be severely tarnished. The rugged combat Damocles is headed directly for the planet which, as it happens, you're to land on. Maybe it would have been wiser to stay on Tieg...

As your ship glides downwards to the Gamma planet you admire the planet's beauty — the vast oceans, the numerous cities and towns clinging to expanses of land emerging from the watery depths. But the total system has eight other planets and 16 moons. A quick scanback at the spaceship and you can be off to some other world. Unfortunately, while you begin searching for looter change, your ship is falling apart — this is its last flight and you're alerted!

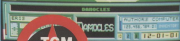
Your personal computer, Samson, promptly orders you to go to the Waste Office in an antique car — a Chevy '66. Your destination, like most of the buildings around the city, has quite a few floors, packed with looters. You find the trading room in the basement, and it's here you're asked to leave first...

You may want to explore the first city but the real challenge lies in getting it now — ship and taking off. There are many other cities to find, if you stay around long enough you'll see the beautiful sight of sea-

rise from Durn, Acheron, Icarus, or any of the other worlds.

As before, a mercenary your primary concern is for financial gain, with the objective of saving Tieg to give you something to do between jobs. In an emergency, poor capability can go to the Lammion Bank (?) for a loan.

To earn money you must trade objects — there are over a hundred — which can mean a lot of delivery runs in a big variety of ground and air vehicles, although there are other ways of getting from A to B — enough said. To help you out, you may load up Damocles' saved games, not that a Mechanized leader is of that much use this



Nothing compares with the ADAMANT 256-bit color game you get off of Tieg. This was going to be a game with one that there's 27 other worlds to...
— *Anonymous*



GAME GAMOGLES
(MERCENARY 2)
PRODUCER: NIMMER

RESULTS

0718

DATE: 01/01/00

64 6

STAFF

95

The feeling of anticipation and expectation when first faced with the novelty of the task is wonderful. Indeed, it is the sensation of curiosity and wonderment as you explore the first city, exploring buildings, going to one of the superbly detailed structures all around, peering over the tops of strange new objects, and generally living a new life is all just so enchanting you quickly become immersed in the world and its events.

[illegible]

The challenging and often painful new environment gave me the opportunity to meet people from other parts of the world. Meeting his wife, Christine, has been instrumental in my long-term life fulfillment. With their common goals and dreams, we're progressing down the road of fulfillment. We have a lot to look forward to as a family in the new country. We're excited about the challenges ahead and the new opportunities that will come our way. We're looking forward to the future and the possibilities that it holds for us. We're looking forward to the future and the possibilities that it holds for us.

Abstracts of Proceedings
 1997-1998
 1999-2000
 2001-2002

Then, in the spring of 1988, the big one arrived. Pre-release hype was minimal—only a few headlines, yet ultimately was rewarded as one of the best combinations of action, adventure and killings of all time—in *Top Gun*. You could find it on the planet Targ with only a computer. Besides, for company, you have to find a few other responsible personnel and do a few missions. Must be formed with the navy, waving on Targ—the fastest and

Mechanoids. Objects are found and a city, underground buildings and spacecraft captured as part of the game, which also has completed in three different ways. For all things mechanics, the *King Survival Kit* was released, a collection of maps and information that formed a complete guide to Tyn.

Again, for the hard and Commadore Elite, graphics were more effective rather than filled out game features had much more detail and high interest that they were playable from many

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About six months later, Mercenary was followed by an expansion disk, *The Second City*. This was located into the original Mercenary and created another city on the opposite side of Targ — the ground covered in red dust rather than lush grass. The air was the same but this time escape is complicated by the city's present governor. In Mercenary, his postulations and life were ruled by your mother-in-law's out for vengeance.

But not a sight of Bungle, Zippy and George in...

RAINBOW ISLAND

There are few villains as nasty as the repulsive and grossly overweight Baron Von Blubba. In times past, he turned two young friends, Bub and Bob, into little, bubble-blowing dinosaurs and kidnapped their girlfriends. But the friends searched for them and eventually, after "bubbling" many of Blubba's henchmen, they found the girls and returned to human form.

Bub, Bob and their companions then chose to leave the bubble and ugly little creatures of society behind and begin life anew — on the Rainbow Islands. It was a very happy place, full of sun, fun, nice people to meet and exciting things to do. Sounds like a Blubba's Holiday Vacation commercial, doesn't it? (Except, in this case, the cheap type is true.)

But the idyllic islands didn't stay that green and pleasant for long. A certain crude, fat and unpleasant person came to the islands. Bernard Blanning, Jr., made that Baron Von Blubba, bigger, stouter and more corrupt than ever before — if that's possible. Aided and abetted by gaggle of assorted minions, Blubba captured all the innocent fun-



Living people he could find and began taking the islands to waste.

Only two people are capable of saving the people and restoring order and joy to the Rainbow Islands. Happily, it's the same duo who evaded capture and whose defeated Blubba before: Bub and Bob. You and a friend take control of the happy friends (just Bub in a one-player game), running and jumping through each island level. Progress to each vertically-scrolling level is helped by your magical and psychedelic ability to form tempo-

rarily solid rainbows in the air. The rainbows can be used as bridges to cross platforms, opening up otherwise unreachable parts of the island level.

With so many of Blubba's minions wandering the islands and out for fresh human blood, you can't keep running and dodging forever. Which is where the rainbows' second use comes into play. If a monster is hit with a rainbow, he's killed and leaves an object behind. If he's hit with the top of the rainbow's arc a piece of fruit is left, to be collected for bonus points. Hitting a bad guy with the underside of a forming rainbow leaves a star; a massive bonus is awarded if all colors of stars are collected.

Every third monster killed drops a random special item. Amongst them are extra lives, double and triple rainbows for increased bopping and killing power, and running shoes for extra speed.

At the end of each level you have to face, yes, you guessed it, a big monster, which takes many rainbows to kill it off. I find you, although big, these monsters aren't the usual ugly beasts. In fact, they're so cute you might have to battle your conscience before attacking them!

Well it's finally here, it's releaseable form. The legal difficulties were sorted out (too busy and therefore there was no need for any computer conversions to be made); Ocean have Blubba's first-level code intact. And when conversions they are! Friends' conversions of Rainbow Islands' prequel, Bubble Bobble (see box), were authentic to the arcade original and now the Bub and Bob story is continued in equally



BUB, BOB, BUBBLES AND BLUBBA

Before they hopped around rainbows, Bub and Bob were petite dinosaurs in Father's Bubble Bobble.

In Bubble Bobble, Bub and Bob could trap monsters in the bubbles they blew and pop them with their heavy noses, to leave behind fruit, bonus letters, antibodies, special abilities, cannons or snuffboxes.

Bubble Bobble is a scream in two player mode: both you and a partner can rampage through 180 levels.

Pinkbird's accurate conversions, coded by Software Creations, were very well received (see TGM1011) and are now available on compilation and budget — check it out.

ISLANDS

Ocean

RAINBOW WRANGLES

The conversion rights to this Taito coin-op were originally bought by Telecomp Soft but they themselves were subsequently bought by MicroProse. Graefsgold converted it for them but Taito prevented MicroProse from releasing it, as their contract with Telecomp Soft prevented a third-party licensee. Thus Ocean, with their strong Taito license links, took up the rights and busily bring us Rainbow Islands.

(or more) accurate fashion.

Aside from graphics and sound, both are remarkably close to the coin-op, original gameplay is intact, and that means very high playability, as addictive as that of Double Dragon. From immediate impressions, it seems like any other cute

Japanese platform game (and knows there's been enough), but once you've completed the first two relatively simple levels, you're hooked.

From bubbles to rainbows, Bob and Buddie are the winning team!

Warren Lapworth

■ (Right) Buddie jumps most fun as Bob hurls through the Rainbow Islands in Heaven.

Between rainbow power is how to get to platform! Early this year, new look on the island's level before starting any other.



Game Rainbow Islands

Producer Ocean

VERSIONS

Amiga £24.99

Atari ST £18.99

Commodore 64 £9.99/£14.99

Spectrum £9.99/£14.99

Amstrad CPC £9.99/£14.99

AMIGA

93%

You want a coin-op? Go to your local computer store and splash out 25 quid on this! Okay, so maybe it's not that accurate but it's certainly close — unless you're a real fan of the arcade machine you'll be hard pushed to spot the differences. There are some colour and slight definition discrepancies, and everything happens a little slower, but otherwise, graphics are identical. Sound effects aren't as close but are a good approximation and jolly the game along.

C64

92%

You don't even need a 16-bit machine and lots of memory to play a highly accurate coin-op conversion! Graphics are on the bleary side, but are as close as you're gonna get considering the C64's resolution capabilities, and bright use of colour helps disguise any slight ugliness. A faithful rendition of the coin-op's music and lively little effects form a soundtrack that rounds off the game nicely.

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SHORTS

BAD COMPANY

Logotron ■ Amiga ■ £34.99

Originally reviewed: TGM200

The Bad Company are back and on an Amiga near you. Like the ST version this is a colorful, fast-moving, "blast what moves" game. Though £35 is still a bit steep for a game that had appeared out of the Ark, the Amiga version holds its own treasures, for some slightly improved sound, and so such attention still seems after an hour or so.

MC

Machine update: 70%

BLACKJACK

Dynami/MicroAce
■ PC ■ £29.95

Blackjack, aka Pontoon and 21, is one of the simplest card games ever. Certainly one of the most widely recognised and second in popularity only to Snaps. Still, its apparently laymenish in the rule for a high-profile product.

Not only can you play basic and advanced skill levels of Blackjack, but you can play with several hands of cards at once. Four different specialised strategies are offered for – split, double-down, surrender and draw/stand – and many gaming statistics are provided.

Predictably, not much to look at and even less to listen to. Text is neatly displayed, cards are simple but clear and easily identifiable.

BEVERLY HILLS COP

Typesoft ■ Amiga ■ £34.99

See C64 version for gameplay.

Fine, good rules for the Amiga version? Why? It's certainly no better than the ST version. The action kicks off to a good start with a decent rendition of the Harold Pinter-style theme, then apart from the driving section with its primitive graphics, I feel the machine isn't even trying. Beverly Hills Cop is a game that, unlike the film, at the end of the day doesn't deliver the goods.

MC

Machine rating: 37%

table, and colours are tasteful. Sound effects are rare – but it's no big deal because they're then great! PC gaming suits as your ears aren't missing much.

The computer program has plenty of options and statistics to hand, and is well presented. But it's only a computerised version of blackjack. And no matter how much it is dressed up, it is still dead as a doornail. Much more fun to be had playing blackjack with a few friends and real cards.

WL

Machine rating: 50%

BULLFIGHT BOXING

Creative Amusement
■ PC Engine ■ £29.95

Me, don't worry, you don't have to go up against a huge, bloodthirsty beast with just a pair of winny gloves and some silly shouts to help you. Instead, you must

BEVERLY HILLS COP

Typesoft ■ C64 ■ £9.99 each,
£14.99 disk

It's an old film, but still one of Eddie Murphy's best. Axel Foley, who is undoubtedly the most memorable of all Murphy's characters, is on the trail of big-time crime dealer Bruce Randolph across downtown Beverly Hills. As you may have already guessed, the gameplay bears absolutely no relation to the film storyline whatsoever.

Armed with a C64-45, you must travel to four locations, pick off Bruno's henchmen and arrest the evil bari. But time is short because a bomb planted by Mr Big threatens to send the city sky high.

Graphically and sonically this is the worst version of the lot. The graphics leave a lot to be desired. Small, spindly, tired looking sprites do their best to entertain – but sadly fail miserably. Fans of the full-modified cop won't be impressed.

MC

Machine rating: 48%

BEVERLY HILLS COP

Typesoft ■ Atari ST ■ £19.99

See C64 version for gameplay.

Graphically, both 16-bit versions are very similar, with Eddie Murphy looking more like Daley Thompson (or is that Marshall Rosenblat?) than the laugh, wise-cracking cop we all know and love. Sound consists of a sting version of the Harold Pinter-style theme with simple effects.

MC

Machine rating: 55%



BALLY DALLY LEGEND

Taito ■ PC Engine ■
£34.95

Before we start, let's just get one thing straight: before you can completely discard this game for being another Jap RPG, as the title suggests, I have to point out that Bally Dally Legend is in fact a motorcade game – and not a particularly good one at that.

You can choose to view on any of 16 famous tracks or take part in the World

Grand Prix. If the latter is selected you can choose between three types of tyres, transmission, suspension, engines and brakes and whether the gears (there are six) will be shifted manually or automatically.

The visual behind the vehicle viewpoint is useful but although the roads perspective is plotted well, there's no illusion of movement. Trackside stripes whizz by too quickly (so beware that they may be as well be just one colour), likewise the windy road, and the plain horizon, with badly-shaded

sky above, scrolls sideways jerkily. The motorcade sports is good but sound is just a high engine tone and a jarring sss.

The best visuals are from the motorcade customisation screen, which is probably the best part of the game. The large bike is very well drawn and parts fly out and in as they are changed. There's also a detailed look of other competitors, making play very intense. Save your money.

WL

Machine rating: 54%

chooses a boxer to fight huge, mouthbreathing men used as trainers to help and advise him. Enter a championship and you'll be presented with a side view of a boxing ring, you and your opponents' energy shown above. Joytek's *Invicta* tracks various moves and suggests it gets you to your feet if you're knocked down. If you've got a multi-player adaptor, you'll be able to join you in *Invicta*, a traditional tournament (as you intended).

There's a different part of the game called simply *Fighting*. Here you make your way rightward and battle various foes with karate-style moves. Money can be earned and collected to spend on equipment at a shop before entering a match.

Brightly flashing sprites are crude and blocky, with animation simple and very mechanical, and backgrounds bland. The fighting sprites (which sometimes flicker) are animated in just two frames and are as ordinary as the backgrounds. Music is okay but effects are basic and hokey.

Overall, a very plain and uninteresting unnamed combat game that's a disappointment considering what the Engine's capable of.

WL

Machine rating: 60%

CABAL

Ocean ■ Amiga ■ £24.99

Originally reviewed: TBM2028

Graphically *Cabal* suffers a little because its chunky sprites look slightly awkward. Turned on the Amiga are acceptable, but the 3-D effect isn't too convincing. Playability is what counts, though, and *Cabal* certainly has plenty of that.

MC

Machine updates: 85%

CHASE HQ

Ocean ■ Amiga ■ £14.99 disk

Originally reviewed: TBM2028

The yuletide's best (in my opinion) racing game has been very successfully transported to the CPC. Graphics are smooth and colorful, and sound effective with clear speech. It's nice to know that Hay and Kemp are on the job, and Ocean are still producing great games.

DARK CENTURY

Titus ■ Atari ST ■ £24.99

In the 23rd Century, prison overcrowding is solved by spatial deformation optics. In addition to cells, recreational rooms, libraries and so on, they each have a factory where the prisoners manufacture goods for the people back on Earth. Strategically, these factories produce sophisticated tanks.

Prisoners have taken over some tanks and have programmed them to explode as they leave the factory, blowing a hole in the ceiling and providing a way to escape. You, a warden, must program and manually control a number of the tanks to stop the prisoners' tanks from completing their program.

For one or two players (solitaire vs the scores), the arena is dotted with energy bubbles that top-up the power of the tank. For six tanks taking part, Player one chooses the number of tanks he controls

DRIVIN' FORCE

Digital Magic Software

Amiga ■ £19.99

If you're bored with race games that just let you control one vehicle, *Drivin' Force* is one to look out for. You can drive a buggy, Formula One car, truck, motorcycle, etc. or sports car and choose the car and nationality of the driver (they still look the same in the actual race no matter what combination you choose but still...). In knockout competition, you must come fourth or above on each vehicle's five tracks. In Mini Knockout you must come third or above in the five tracks of a chosen vehicle. In League you play all the tracks in a random order and are awarded points depending on where you finish and in Mini League the tracks of your chosen vehicle are played in tandem.

The usual view of behind and slightly

above the vehicle is given, usual rear-view control convention applies and various displays around the screen give times, laps remaining, position and so on.

I was quite looking forward to *Drivin' Force*. From preview screenshots and demos, it was clear the 3-D graphics could be on the sticky side but I thought it'd be Digital Magic Software would be an underdog who came through with a hot racer, like Amiga did with soccer. But it wasn't to be. *Drivin' Force* is a pale imitation of *Power Drift*, the ramps and suspended roads characteristic of that racer making a frequent appearance. There's no feeling of movement and no excitement or competitive spirit generated in *Drivin' Force* as you're much better off getting hold of *Atari*'s excellent conversion of *Power Drift*. Get your drift...!

WL

Machine rating: 61%

It just goes to prove that 3-bit versions are better (like Spectrum version was great too) in some aspects than 16-bit ones.

MC

Machine updates: 85%

CHICAGO 90

Infogrames ■ Amiga ■ £34.99

Originally reviewed: TBM2028

Choose to be a cop or a villain and get ready for the chase of your life. Ok so I lied. It's all exactly the same as the ST offering: detailed cars, nice soundings and pleasant sound. Only problem is the game when it's too boring to play for any extended period. Hey, but... You're bound to get some good hits from when you turn out as many 'bad' games when you turn out as many 'good' as Infogrames are doing lately. It's just as well they have greats like *Sim City*, *North and South*, *Outlaw* and *Full Throttle* (plans to supplement them).

MC

Machine updates: 90%

FIGHTER BOMBER

Atari ■ C64 ■ £9.99

disk, £14.99 disk

Originally reviewed: TBM2024

The PC version received an excellent review when it appeared several issues

and obviously his maximum is one less than the total number - it wouldn't be much of a game with no opposition!

The tank graphics for the game were produced using a ray-tracing program but unfortunately, apart from the attractive rotating tanks at the beginning of each game, they are so small you can't see the shading properly. Tanks approach in slightly only 3-D and the backgrounds are virtually non-existent, just some stars and the occasional planet - the tanks appear to be floating. There are some pleasing metallic clangs and electrical hums among the sound effects.

Dark Century is an example of good ideas misdirected. Integrating ray-traced graphics into a game is one that could produce images of stunning and realistic high-tech vehicles but here there's just one tank. The programming is very interesting but there's little for it to be used on - only one type of opponent and no obstacles in

the arena. Also, mouse control is overdone. Scores would be much more easily entered via the keyboard rather than with number panels and pointers.

Dark Century has interesting things to offer but not enough of them to make a good value.

WL

Machine rating: 70%



questions.

Overcoming is the main aim of the game. Penetration plans can set up goals for yourself during the match. After a fair tally of goals the awards will come looking for you. Transfer opportunities can be purchased for £3000, and here an opposing team makes a bid for your skills. That's one way to fame and glory. You can also get national acclaim if the national team scouts like the look of you. Then there's a chance of playing for your country in the World Cup.

It's all a bit modestly measured, but FOOTIE is still fun to play. The title sounds suspiciously similar to Graeme's Super Goal (1989/90), but is still impressive. Strategy aspects control your fate, and Kick Off itself will feel nothing challenging in the match action. Still, it should still be a few punters who can wait for Player Manager.

MC

Machine ratings: 70%

FOOTBALLER OF THE YEAR II

Gremlin ■ Atari ST ■ £24.99

See the Atari version for game details. Same on the Amiga version, with decent runs and even effects. Worth a look for football fans.

MC

Machine ratings: 74%

HEAVY UNIT

Taito ■ PC Engine ■ £24.95

Why have computer/console games, particularly shoot-'em-ups, got this thing about aliens and robots? Why not blast down only jets and planes with a spacey little of washing-up liquid? Or assorted vehicles with insect repellent? Heavy Unit is unfortunately similar to most games of the shoot-'em-up genre: the background sounds homely while waves and waves of aliens attack your ship.

Backgrounds are colourful. Sprites are generally passable; while some are drop-offs are nicely designed, particularly the larger opponents. Sound effects are sharp and mean lively.

Although Heavy Unit is well produced and playable, is there really a need for another H-Type-style horizontal shooter? It's a highly derivative, dated game. Trigger-happy gamers players will tap up history now, but only experienced ones will stick with it. Heavy Unit is tough from the beginning and gets no easier. Consider your pyjamas and your toilet before gun blazing.

MC

Machine ratings: 77%

INTRUDER

Ubisoft ■ Atari ST ■ £19.99

As the title suggests, you are a foreign ship entering alien airspace. You're on a mission from your home planet to rid them from the evil, aggressive and soon-to-be-invincible aliens. Looking not too dissimilar to R-Type, your egg-shaped ship must fly through waves after waves of strange but steady alien forces. They include glowing spheres, rotating circular plates (?) and even footcrawlers (!). You start with a low-powered laser, but with the destruction of each wave new appliances appear. These include point multiplexes (from x2 to x5),

FIFTH GEAR

Hasbro ■ Amiga ■ £19.99

See Atari ST version for game details.

There's little difference between this and the ST version. As in earlier game's a complete failure on 16-bits simply because of shallow content and strangely high price.

MC

Machine ratings: 40%

FIFTH GEAR

Hasbro ■ Atari ST ■ £19.99

You're tied up with the traffic jams on the M25 (car park of the future), powered by the confluence on the left and regulated by the workmen drilling up the road just outside your house. What means, you absolutely love it and pass those inner-city stick-your-finger-in-it (fly other stickers's even less enjoying than this pathetic excuse for a ST). You've had enough. It's time for rebellion.

You've entered an illegal rally to vent your anger on cars. Makes sense as a virtually swirling strip of land and your spot machine guns built into the front of your car, just to incite the others on the road. They're similarly armed but you

cancelled other devices along the way.

Scoring's smooth but backgrounds are flat and repetitive scenes are simple and short of colour. The music isn't overdone but interesting sound effects are forgettable and the control system's unresponsive.

Fifth Gear was a budget game for 8-bits a few years back and Hasbro have clearly decided to reissue it in favour of newbies. This wouldn't be so bad but 16-bit Fifth Gear is what-what? It has budget quality graphics and sound, and unworkable, yet is twenty quid. At a time its last action would before but at four times that you're better off spending the money in an arcade.

MC

Machine ratings: 40%



DEATHTRACK

Activision ■ PC ■ £34.99

DeathTrack is the latest in a long line of previously decent sports (like Speedball and Steamball). And as the title suggests you have to race — in the death — around the American continent. You've a choice of three vehicles: The Helix, The Crusher and The Pitbull, each with their own capabilities.

After choosing your car you must jump it with various components (crates, tires, armor) using a money \$10000. Now into

the track. Receiving a missile hit registers on your damage indicator, which also an armored indicator. Fuel gauge, rear view mirror HUD (just to target enemies) and a lap counter. Any damage or fuel loss can soon be settled with a quick tap in the air — and a burst of more don. Some players also have bonuses on their heads to punning an individual player often brings satisfactory remuneration.

The impressive graphics of DeathTrack, from the digitized mug shots of your enemies to the polygon cars crashing



the race (after a slowed practice). There are ten different tracks to race around. The number of laps is variable, as is your skill level, but what you can do nothing about is the general death and mayhem inflicted by your opponents.

Your car is equipped with numerous goodies, all placed to enhance your drive — and some to blow the other vehicles off

around the track, make it totally engaging. The only real problem is the enormous amount of stats that have to be noted after each race, this is probably the most fun I've had playing a PC game for a long while.

MC

Machine ratings: 82%

HERZOG ZWEI**Technic Soft****■ Sega Mega Drive ■ £29.95**

This, without doubt, is one of silliest named video games I've ever played or heard of (and I've played a lot). But it's an unusual product for the 16-bit Sega console - a strategy game. Against the remote or another player, an alien world is entered. Both sides have a base to work plus a number of outposts, depending on the type of game selected. As in many games, the aim is simply to capture the enemy flags before he takes yours, but in *Herzog Zwei* your sprite is a Transformer-style robot that can become a jet aircraft. Other bases can be dispatched from your forces to defend from attack.

Bases and outposts have a covering metallic sheen and although some planets have dull backgrounds others are attractively shaded in many colours. Sprites are rather plain but interesting and the scrolling is smooth. Sound effects are sharp and futuristic, and while music is highly derivative, it suits the game.

But strategy on a console. Wonders will never cease? But it has to be stated that it's really a multi-direction shoot-'em-up with one or two tactical possibilities. Whether it's intended to get strategists to consider buying the console or to broaden the horizons of trigger-happy novices, I don't know. Either way, it's quite refreshing and can be quite addictive in two-player mode, hence sturdy developing between friends.

PS**Machine rating: 75%**

power-up weapons, energy pods and the normal bonus points. Weapons such as mega-power lasers and homing missiles come in very useful against the end-of-level tough guys, but can be easily lost by wandering over the evil green spheres.

It's all been done before but *Insulder* features some noteworthy metallic graphics. Play the sound (not as original, just annoying). Still, shoot-'em-ups are all the same, aren't they? *Amuse...*

MC**Machine rating: 74%**
**HARLEY DAVIDSON -
THE ROAD TO STURGIS**
Mindscape ■ PC ■ £34.99

What is Sturgis you may ask yourself, that it's a town in America where once a year bikers gather for a week-long party. You have ten days to reach Sturgis and prove your worth as one of the best.

The longer your hair, the harder the task, and the higher the points reward. So if points are gained for brawling, motorcycle skill, charisma and money. Though, to become the ultimate biker god,

you have to finish the part. A visit to the local shop will soon top you up in the right gear and presents you for the long and painful journey to Sturgis.

Riding along the highway can become a real tedious, but the attention to detail - especially on the biker's foot when changing gear - is impressive.

If you want to put up a few bikers without making life and limb, *Harley Davidson - The Road to Sturgis* could be just the ticket. It's certainly one of the most original games this month.

MC**Machine rating: 76%**
**JOHN MADDEN
FOOTBALL**
**Electronic Arts ■ GC-65
£14.99**

John Madden is little (if at all) known in the UK but apparently he's an ex-American football player, who recently co-commentated on CBS/Channel Four's Superbowl coverage (well, there's a thought). Here, also the host of EA's first such foot game.

Statistics on the teams you control and oppose can be viewed and stored. There's

a wide selection of plays: 81 defensive and 81 offensive. The plays can be made by joystick, automatically by computer or a combination of both. They can also be edited or created from scratch.

A very snail-like-looking game. Digitised pictures of *Mr. Madden* are vague and grainy. The pitch is plain and its scrolling is jerky, with small and poorly animated sprites. Sound is little more than bleeps of acknowledgment.

The list of American football games grows ever longer, but none have had any impact since *Conanware's* TV Sports Football, in March 89. *John Madden Football* doesn't change that. True, it has an impressive quantity and variety of plays but its visuals are so flat and unexciting, generating pure excitement and little involvement. Stick with a real juggler.

PS**Machine rating: 55%****MR HELIX**
**Hudson Soft ■ PC Engine ■
£29.95**

Originally released: TOSMOS

With a whorl of robot blades, *Mr. Helix* comes onto the PC Engine with all the style and cute graphics of the team's arcade original. The sprites are colourful, attractive and amazingly detailed. If you've been put off by any of the other versions of *Mr. Helix*, give the big chopper another go. This is probably the best version yet.

MC**Machine update: 80%**

PC ENGINE KID**Hudson Soft ■ PC Engine ■ £29.95**

His real name is Pithersanthropus Computarius. The name is a long one, but our baby-faced hero, although small in stature, is well-versed in the art of the Japanese Hanafuda. The little chap is taken back millions of years, to the Prehistoric Era, where he must overcome all manner of vicious inhabitants and probably rescue someone. (Probably Japanese) must try several languages at school, (yawn). The strange creatures are soon disposed of with a sharp head-butt from Pity's big toe.

Progression through the levels also reveals plants containing various goodies. Along with energy foods (which increase jump power), there are health (energy), fruit (bonus points) and pieces of shield. The latter sends the young fella into

convulsions and soon gets his temperature up for some serious action. A second piece of the hot stuff makes out Pity invincible.

I can honestly say I haven't seen a game as funny as this since *Chen and Chen* (also on the Engine). Even though our hero is a wee lad he certainly stands out some serious hassle to the plethora of Jap attackers. All the graphics are good. Paragrounds are well-detailed and animated, with backgrounds containing all the colour and originality of the most addictive Engine games.

Some of the later levels (like travelling through the insides of a dinosaur) are pure inspiration. Any self-respecting gamer/player can't fail to appreciate the amount of time and effort gone into PC Engine Kid. Essential purchase number 15 of this month. I'm happy to say!

MC
Machine rating: 85%

KNIGHT RIDER SPECIAL**Rack in Video ■ PC Engine ■ £24.95**

'Knight Rider, a shadowy journey into the world of a man who does not exist...' However, the satirical video-over that accompanied the floppy makes it this baby rather fit the bill. But anyway, in this game you'll do a lot better. Michael Knight, under the watchful eye of Connor, the unlikely boss, and Connor, the ex-mechanical expert with an identity crisis. And of course, you drive the computerised car with the astonishingly strong motor. KITT (Knight Industrial Two Thousand).

Your mission is a very simple one. Within a time limit, get from A to B, B to C, C to D, D to... Well, you get the idea. There are other vehicles on the road, of course, but when you're armed with laser guns and other such handy appliances, no problem. Just blow the suckers away. If they're the sort of baddies who still got a Comic Book red nose tied to the front, they deserve all they get.

The conventional racing viewpoint of

behind and slightly above the car works fine. Speed and perspective reasonable, although there's relatively little road on-screen and the illusion of movement is minimal. Sprites are dull and the spinning of KITT when he crashes is pathetic. There are some good digitised portraits of Michael, Devon and Kierrie. KITT's speech is a little too high pitched - possibly something to do with the fact that it's all in Japanese.

As a game and especially as a Knight Rider license, this title soon after leaving the garage. Or, more appropriately, the Knight Industrial Two-Wheel track.

WL
Machine rating: 62%

NINJA WARRIORS**Virgin/The Sales Curve ■ Amstrad CPC ■ £9.99 case, £14.95 disk**

Originally released in TG0400

A big, big let down compared to the other conversions. Blocky, crudely animated



despatched the exit to the next level can be found.

Sounds great doesn't it? Sadly, it's not. The small, almost mishapen hero marches along, kills an alien and... well, that's about it. The only relief from tedium is to pick up the special powers. The backgrounds are as static as the action, the characters change colour from level to level but the default layout remains the same. Granted, the aliens are pretty tough to beat. But make sure that you have a good supply of statulistics and strong coffee handy.

MC
Machine rating: 40%

PRO TENNIS TOUR**Ubi Soft ■ PC ■ £24.99**

Originally reviewed: TG04002 as Great Courts.

Closer than some slightly strange claims of using LISA - very strange it is C64, very similar in appearance to the Amiga original, clearly chosen perspective court, big, pleasantly slow spinners and convincingly realistic ball movement. Sound great, of course, but the gameplay is just as good - as long as you don't try to play using the keyboard.

MC
Machine rating: 84%



Legislative sprays wander across equally dull and gaudy backgrounds. Scoring is slow and tedious and sound effects are harsh. Gameplay fairly nervous.

MC
Machine rating: 58%

OUTLANDS**Pandora ■ Amiga ■ £19.99**

Should humans, in 2037, aliens will come to Earth, apparently in peace. And us humans believe them. Of course, aliens being what they are, they drive us away from our home and we're forced to develop a colony on Mars. But then they come after us there too.

This time we're ready: in this simultaneous two-player game, vertical levels are negotiated in space-suits while firing off waves of aliens. Weapons left behind by destroyed enemies enable firepower to be built up.

All graphics are ahead of colour, particularly the backgrounds, which sport a nicely jolly two-layer parallax. The backgrounds and sprites are simple and boring to look at and attack waves, bullets and so on are unappealing in visible jumps. Sound effects are a mixture of busy and woody sci-fi samplers.

Shooting 'em-ups are, for a parity, Outlands is a simple, dated and boring one. Great graphics and really control response are instant turn-off. The simultaneous two-player action helps redeem it a little but not enough to make this anywhere near worth £20.

WL
Machine rating: 31%

SHOOT-EM-UP CONSTRUCTION KIT**Outlaw ■ Atari ST ■ £29.99**

...OF SHOOT, as it affectionately knows, puts you in the shoes of a games designer and programmer. Menu-driven, it allows you to create static screens or vertically scrolling shoot-'em-ups with graphics, sound effects and attack waves all tailored to your own preferences.

Graphics are designed using built-in tools, then positioned on a map to form the

ROBOWARRIOR**Jaleco ■ NES ■ £29.99**

If they come as a surprise to you, but in the distant future the Earth will be dying due to over-population and pollution. But the governments solve the problem by employing a brilliant scientist to build an artificial home for the whole of mankind. In 2036 the colonists arrive, but not long after start trouble driving the now inhabitants underground. They also alter the planet's weather control system so that the once green and peaceful land is covered in acid and ice. The humans send an SOS to earth, and a Z-Type Earth Defence system (ZED) is sent to help. With its teen gun and limited supply of bombs he stands ready to face the meddling aliens.

Bombs are used to clear a path through the bush-like obstacles that block your path, whilst the gun is used for dispatching the wide variety of alien enemies. The destruction of the obstacles occasionally reveals ores, those include bombs, more powerful weapons and medals (used to buy goods in 'shopping centres'). What all the aliens have been

THE SEVEN GATES OF JAMBALA

Thalion ■ Amiga ■ £34.99

You're a cute little elf called Draven and must use the seven gates of the title to reach the seven cities of Jambala, each of which contains a piece of a powerful magic wand. The cities take the form of

fantastically sprawling levels, constructed from platform networks and patrolled by various nasty beasts, notably some large dragons. Jambala are lured from more handy creatures and are used for offence, whilst various items may be found for later use.

Presentation is high, with a cinematic title sequence showing coloured droplets

rolling down the screen then the Thalion logo gliding into the screen. In-game, backgrounds are bright and detailed but most sprites are weak. Dragon looks and moves amusingly and the huge dragons are impressive. There's a number of quality touches with neat effects and swirling's smooth.

Although the visuals and sounds of The Seven Gates of Jambala are good, gameplay is less than competing. Platform shoot-'em-up arcade adventures (a long title for a straightforward concept) are long in the tooth and these days must have new features on (and) high playability to be worthwhile. The Seven Gates of Jambala has neither. It's not bad but not good, and certainly not magic.

WL

Machine rating: 70%

THE SEVEN GATES OF JAMBALA

Thalion ■ Atari ST ■ £19.99

See Amiga version for gameplay. Very similar to the Amiga version; colourful graphics, good sound (though less impressive than the Amiga) but gameplay clichéd and only of passing interest.

WL

Machine rating: 71%



game's background or animated to make air ships, turrets, explosions and so on. Enemy attacks waves are programmed to tracing their intended path with justified movements, and player limitations (lives, speed, manoeuvring area and so on) set finally, add the sound effects and you're ready to play your own game – or test your friends' gaming skills with it.

There are three free games with SEIUCK: Bay 'N' Tails, a 2' take of the coin-op Bay Fight; Blood 'N' Bullets, a Commando variant; and PsychoBlas, where enemies surround the player, who's stranded in the middle of the screen.

Other than the free games, graphical quality depends upon the user's skill, although it must be pointed out that the scrolling is joddy; sound is more limited, restricted to weak, broadly-stylised ST effects – samples would have used up memory otherwise put to good use on attack, retreat, but wouldn't have improved game impact.

Much fun can be had with SEIUCK, particularly when designing and animating enemies, and completing the creation of your very own game is highly rewarding. It's a shame that horizontally scrolling games aren't possible to allow more varied classes to be made. This wouldn't be too hard a problem but at £29.99 SEIUCK is quite expensive. Shoot-'em-up fans will love it; others won't be as enthusiastic but should still consider it.

WL

Machine rating: 74%

SHINOBI

Amik/Sega ■ PC Engine ■ £29.99

Originally reviewed: CDM/314

No matter how much you try, you can't get your big personality into the slot at the front of the PC Engine. What is a pity as that's all that's missing from this latest conversion of the beat-'em-up coin-op.

Graphics and animation are arcade quality, which goes without saying on most PC Engine games. Also taken for granted is the consistent playability of arcade conversions on computers – Shinobi is probably more playable than I remembered impressive

credentials for such an old game, but ones that make it an essential purchase for all Engineers.

MC

Machine update: 88%



THE UNTOUCHABLES

Decon ■ Amiga ■ £34.99

Originally reviewed: T/20/24

What more can be added to the comments made about this game already adapted upon ST? Decon have got the heavy boys out to do the bit on the Amiga version but Graphics are possibly better than the ST version (still with the great detail and animations, accompanied by some superb Teeny-bop-style rap-style lyrics. All Amiga coming from Nintendo apply here...

MC

Machine update: 83%



H i T E C G A M E S



SPY 1000-1000-1000-1000



SPY 1000-1000-1000-1000



SPY 1000-1000-1000-1000



SPY 1000-1000-1000-1000

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25th ANNIVERSARY
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WIZARDS AND WARRIORS

Accolade/Rare ■ NES ■ £29.99

Legend says that Maki the wizard was the teacher of the great Merlin, but the years haven't been kind to him. He has turned to evil, dark side and now uses his magic for evil. Shockingly, he has taken the Princess captive.

So, as Karna, you enter the woods of Elinrod in search of Gaele's broomstick. Maki's stronghold. Your dusty blade frightfully dispatches most opponents, but some possess the dark power and aren't afraid to use it against you. Though

you aren't powerless in the magic department yourself. Amongst others, the Axe of Igo, the Cloak of Darkness and Boots of Puma give protection when found. Gems can be collected and used to help the warriors who guard the item gardens.

Wizards and Warriors is a typical platform game; plenty of leaping around is needed to reach parts of the more inaccessible areas. Graphically the game isn't brilliant, it's colourful but the sprites lack detail. Sound is also a bit of a disappointment; a mediocre tune plays on the title screen but in-game sounds are limited to a few clank, clank effects. Simple addition but little is the long run.

MC

Machine rating: 70%



F-19 STEALTH FIGHTER

MicroProse ■ Spectrum ■

£9.99 case, £14.99 disk

Originally reviewed: FGM0145

As is usual with MicroProse products, the entire game (or so it seems) instruction manual must be absorbed to the full. It's all worthwhile, though. The Spectrum version is both graphically and sonically superb. The wire-frame graphics are well constructed, with the dimensional sound effect (like the chatter of machine gun fire or the whirr of a missile release) adding to the atmosphere. Accolade is up to the usual MicroProse standard. F-19 Stealth Fighter is certainly worthy of consideration from stealth flight gamers.

MC

Machine update: 80%

THE DUEL - TEST DRIVE II

Accolade ■ Amstrad ■

£9.99 case, £14.99 disk

Originally reviewed: FGM0160

The graphics on the CPC are what you'd expect, ie, very colorful and blurry. Sound is limited to recovery engine noises and a smash, bang, crash effect when you crash. This is old hat now. Accolade, but some of you out there might not be quite as fast as me.

MC

Machine update: 90%

VOLFIED

Telco ■ PC Engine ■ £24.99

Carried me if the wrong (you usually are - Ed) but this game (or at least its concept), apparently a conversion of a Japanese, appeared a few years back on the C&U under the name of Zolga. As it's such a simple concept, I probably first appeared long before then. See if it sounds familiar to you.

A small ship is steered around the edge of a rectangular playing area, which has a number of enemy ships launching around inside it. The ship can leave the safety of the edge and venture inward, leaving a trail behind it. If an enemy or bullet touches it during this time, a life is lost. But if it gets back to the edge, the area enclosed by the edge and trail is filled in, shrinking the size of the playing area and altering its shape. When 75% or more has been filled, the levels complete. If a job is entered within a filled area it gives things like an extra life,

a laser or a boost, to kill the enemies for a time.

Volried isn't much to look at. Backgrounds are plain and other than big enemies, sprites are small and simple. But there is a nice animated scroll bar panel between levels. Sound consists of a few irritating basic effects, the most annoying being the driving background noise.

There's no doubting the playability of this simple yet highly intriguing game. Although you're basically just hovering from A to B while avoiding enemies, there's skill and strategy needed to reach the elusive 75% plus. Luck is often required to make it to the edge before an enemy touches your trail and it can be very frustrating to lose a life just before you reach the edge.

Volried's problem is that it soon becomes very difficult (and more dependent) and there's no continuous-play facility. What's more, visually the same game (Zolga) can be bought for computers for a measly two quid.

WL

Machine rating: 74%

WAR OF THE DEAD

Victor ■ PC Engine ■ £24.99

It's just typical, isn't it? You kill off plagues of vile and revolting monsters, navigating your homestead, and what happens? More supernatural folk exterminate them and

you've got a plague of undead vile and revolting monsters. And you, as the girl leader of S-SMART (Supernatural and Special Mayaguez Attack Team), must assemble your crew and get rid of them.

You explore a large multi-directional scrolling area similar to a map and, on reaching certain points, the viewpoint switches to a sideways scrolling scene where the undead monsters attack. Killing them with whatever weapon you have at hand (initially a knife or dagger) makes them drop useful items, later selected from a menu screen.

The graphics on the scrolling map are small, repetitive and very boring. The sprites in the sideview combat scenes are quite unattractive but that's fine because the monsters are supposed to be ugly. The green haired heroine sprite looks quite like Wonder Woman (reviewed a couple of years back) and moves well across the unobtrusive smooth scrolling backgrounds.

War of the Dead tries to be a cross between an arcade adventure and a creepy hack 'n' slash game but only really succeeds in being the latter. The exploration/adventure section is generally an unwanted interruption. Okay for a few plays but ultimately rather lifeless.

WL

Machine rating: 60%

ZOMBI

UltiSoft ■ Atari ST ■ £19.99

It is written that when there is no room left in hell the dead come back to life. The devil has seen fit to cast many unfortunate souls into the world of mortals, and as they are very hungry they'll eat all they can get. The zombies are on the rampage and there are only four 'live' people who survive their onslaught. The names only means of escape is via helicopter. One problem, though, no fuel. Bummer.

Play one of the characters, explore dark corridors and shops, but at all costs find the fuel. Shops contain food, illumination devices and weapons. There guns for the gun! and an axe for the axe! are available to help you fend off the undead.

This game is horrible. I don't mean gameplay wise I'm talking about the subject matter - it's sooooo creepy I nearly jumped out of my seat the first couple of times a zombie attacked. They look like

something out of a real-life horror movie, so put the curtains, turn off the lights and prepare for a new nightmare!

MC

Machine rating: 70%

ZOMBI

UltiSoft ■ Amiga ■ £24.99

See Atari ST version for gameplay. With the layout exactly the same as the Atari version, Amiga Zombi is as good. The mission to survive zombie attacks, find fuel and escape is still a tough one. Graphically similar to the ST version, the Amiga features improved sound (if minor). However, the music isn't anything to really stand out, with the sporty FX having most impression. Horror movie buffs take a pass. (from behind the sofa preferably).

MC

Machine rating: 70%

Too good to be true?

An Amiga sound sampler plus software for under £40?

Robin 'intoxicator' Candy pets Microdeal's Master Sound to the test...

Master mixes

Sound samplers for any computer normally cost more than the £30 odd asking price for Master Sound. Then, you can buy the best hardware for about the same price but Master Sound also includes sample editing software and sample a sequencer. With sampling and playback rates of up to 44.1kHz it all sounds too good to be true.

Once the software has been loaded, the first task is to set the input level of the sound source. An oscilloscope at the bottom-right corner of the screen displays the current level of the input source as a moving waveform which corresponds to the volume level of the sound source. If the volume level is too high the peaks of the waveform will disappear from the display. The optimum level is where the peaks just reach the display. Setting the correct input level for your sound source is an important aspect of sampling; if the level is too high, the sample will sound distorted, while if the level is too low it will sound quiet and fuzzy.

MASTER AND SERVANT

The main screen is divided into two main areas. The top of the screen displays any sample data currently in memory as a graphic waveform. This represents volume changes over time. Two cursor bars are used in this display to define which section of the waveform is played. (These are used when you sample more than you actually wish to use.) Just below this display is the playback control panel with options including reverse play, scroll display left/right (used when all the sample data can't be fitted into the screen area), magnify



options and loop mode (which continuously plays the sample data within the two bars).

The editing panel contains all the controls needed to get your sample into a usable form. One of the handy controls is Listen To Input. This sends whatever sound is currently going into the sampler out through the monitor. It's used to help tune up your CD player/speakers deck etc and also provides an audible check on the input setting. It's not a particularly impressive function but it is a useful one which many samplers (including some professional units) neglect.

A spectrum analyser option displays a real-time moving break-down of all the different incoming sound frequencies. Each band of frequencies gets its own bar, just like a spectrum analyser on a hi-fi rack. So you can tell at a glance what frequencies a sound contains and in what proportions — helping you set your sample rate. Sounds which consist mainly of lower frequencies can be sampled at lower rates than sounds made up of higher frequencies. You can't have a considerable amount of memory by only sampling at higher rates when

necessary. Master Sound also provides an alternative method of saving memory with a compressed sample option. This reduces the memory occupied by the sample by 50%. To use the compressed sample the playback rate must also be reduced to 50%. A compressed sample is slightly better quality than a straight low

RATING SAMPLING

Samples are created by taking 'snapshots' of the incoming sound, rather like a film camera takes photographs of motion in very quick succession. A sample takes many thousands of these snapshots each second. The rate at which they are taken is measured in kilobits. The higher the rate the more snapshots taken and the more accurate the representation of the original sound. Sample rate directly affects the quality of the sample being taken. Lower sample rates aren't capable of recording high frequencies. Samples, with their high frequencies taken at a low sample rate tend to sound fuzzy.

with sample. While the filter corrected fewer samples taken at lower frequencies sound less fuzzy. However, if this option is used repeatedly the sample starts to sound muffled.

ADLIB TO FADE

Also included in the editing panel are fade-in/out options but they have very little practical use. You have no control over the level of fading used so if you try to fade in a short sample you end up losing it altogether.

There are no effects options but you can create a pseudo-effect by using the overlay icon. This mixes two samples together so if you overlay the same sample over the top of itself with a slight displacement you end up with an echo effect.

Just like the ST version of Master Sound, the Amiga software includes a sequencer menu. This is very basic but you can use it to make your own sample demos. For instance you could sample different sections from the same song then link them together and eventually other samples over the top of the sequence. You can have up to four multi-panels playing at once — one for each of the Amiga's sound channels — to get your own personalised mix. However, only samples recorded at 14.4kHz can be used and thus a maximum of 18 different samples in any one sequence.

LOW - FI

The most important factor when assessing any sampler is the quality of samples that it produces. Master Sound has a low way in as low as 8kHz can be recorded as one of the better Amiga samplers. Even when sampling at higher rates the samples often sound fuzzy. However, the package isn't claiming to be a post-professional product the emphasis is more on fun and this is reflected in the lack of complicated editing commands and the inclusion of a basic sample sequencer. It's a good introduction to music on the Amiga and costs significantly less than expensive packages. The sample options allow samples to be saved in IFF format — the format used by many Amiga music packages such as Electronic Arts' Deluxe Music Constructor 3d and most Public Domain music programs. So for relatively little money you can build a reasonable non-IFF music set up. Microdeal: PO Box 68, St Austell, Cornwall PL28 4YB. Tel: (0726) 66828.

OUR MAN IN Japan

There's not just one console launched this month in Japan, but TWO! Both of them are from NEC and both belong to the Engine family. NEC have also leaked news of an amazing hand-held PC Engine. Shintaro Konoaya investigates...

Kimochi wa, imagine you work at NEC. No, imagine you own NEC. Now imagine, if you will, that over the next few days from the Home Electronics Department come up to you and present a fairly good looking console running some impressive little games. It goes on sale as the PC Engine (Acclaim version — E). It's an

instant success — even in the States. Soon after, certain 16-bit machines begin to steal your thunder, so the boys come up with the Super 32bit. This new machine is an improvement over the original and has the bonus of a 32 Mega bit on-chip called the Power Compote. This, yet again, makes the public content. Or so you'd have thought...

Apparently, the new Engine is not enough for the dealer-hungry public. The guys in the H&E store then yell more Engines into the marketplace. So now we have the Super 32bit (with approximately double the storage and display power), the PC Engine Shuttle and the PC Engine Core.

SHUTTLE SHUFFLE

The PC Engine Shuttle — as in space shuttle — is the young person's PC Engine. It's what you give the kids for Christmas. If they've been nagging all year for a PC Engine and you feel

like being patronising and condescending. The Shuttle is a cheap PC Engine, and a real big long long standard one at that. It's about \$25 less than your average Engine, coloured in the new NEC spray paint (grey, like the Super 32bit), and has two strange wings along the top of it. Either this is the most aesthetically computer since the ZX81 or it's an attempt to look like something out of Battlerider Chappaloo. Apart from the obvious 'trend' issue, the Shuttle is lacking one important feature that has made the original such an attraction — the extension port, this, that's right, there's no place to slot your CD-ROM or Laser vs. Although, it does have a connector for a battery backup. And it (like the others in the new range) comes bundled with the new controller pad, Turbo Pad 2 (like the old one with adjustable rapid fire).



- 1 ■ Locks onto Core, power on
- 2 ■ ROM-card slot
- 3 ■ Even monitor control port, with auto-tune
- 4 ■ Socket for new controller pad
- 5 ■ AT socket
- 6 ■ Power supply socket



■ Breeding like rabbits! NEC has fifteen Super 32bit





CORE, IT'S FAMILIAR

But the big news (heavy sarcasm) is the arrival of the PC Engine Core Grafx. Boy, is this one leak of a machine! A truly remarkable quantum leap over the original Engine. This Core Grafx is remarkably the same shape, the same size, the same price as the original but it's green with blue moths! So what's the difference between this and the original? Ummm... nothing (nice colour, though).

So now you have four different Engines, five if you include the American one. Collect them all. Get a few nicked with each purchase. Collect four receipts and make a paper hat.

But seriously... (as Phil Collins would say) does this mean the death of the good old white PC Engine? It would seem so. Mine is not to question why, mine is but to see and buy (these Japanese proverbies are getting better — Ed). And while we're on the subject, I bet you're wonder why there's no T in Grafx — search me!

LYNX LAUNCH

Now only lighter things (well, not as light as the Game Boy). Like the Atari Lynx. I know this is Marshall's area but here's no more (I'm sure he won't mind if I say a few words). The Lynx was launched in Japan on November 30, and it seems to have been fairly well received, although it didn't get anywhere near the sales of the Game Boy over Christmas. It costs about twice the price of a Game Boy (with a similar weight and size difference). There's no doubting the Lynx's power, but is it really the hand-held everyone's claiming? It certainly won't fit in your little Japanese pockets (filled up with too much money no doubt — Ed), and I wouldn't fancy the chances of the screen if I dropped the thing on a train. There's also that price! For £130 over here, I could get a Game Boy with six games, a PC Engine or numerous boxes of tape. This is the main reason, I feel, it's far to sell in the quantities expected.

And guess what? It seems that along with the much renamed coloured version of the Game Boy (to reach the UK in October), it'll also be hand-held version of the PC Engine available. Details are a bit sketchy at time of writing, but it seems the little thing is nearing prototype stage and should be

able to run existing PC Engine games. It's also a touch lighter than the Game Boy even has a screen size of three inches. Perhaps these guys in NEC development have been working, after all.

FAR EASTERN PROMISE

In mid-March on the PC Engine came Tiger Road and New Zealand Story. What you might describe as odd, strong and very unoriginal. In fact, I've yet to see a truly good original game on the PC Engine. I've seen those great games that are nearly accessible in the UK, the likes of Run City, for instance. You've never had it so good... Speaking of Sim-City, may I just say that Tokyo has its share of problems — overcrowding, pollution, disgusting amounts of money, etc — but there aren't, and never have been, any monsters roaming the streets or rooftops of Tokyo. I hate to break a myth in this humble column but they were actually true. Obviously an easy mistake to make, I'm sure.

The old big Engine game to look out for is Darius on the CD-ROM in incredible Dolby surround sound. But wait, what's that? Something in the distance, it looks like, no it can't be, but it is — it's Space Invaders, the Tetsuya original. Well, actually it's Space Invaders: The Day of the Ringers, but what real difference is it going to make. A lot of graphics, a lot of sound. Just chipping up an old bore. Like Shadow of the Beast, really.

Well, I suppose that's it for one more issue, one more month. And I'd like to close on a fairly cheery note. Some of you out there may watch Burnz on Channel 4. What I was last in England I caught a bit of it and I must congratulate Lyal Pearson, the presenter, on doing a terrific job in conveying what is (to the untrained eye) a very silly sport. And those of you that think it's a load of naked fat geese should check out The Boon, The Wolf and Chrysanthemum. Light and thinner than meat, but without doubt the best there has been for quite some time. In the most recent championship, Kariishi, who had been going through a bad patch, came back with 11 wins out of 15 matches to win his first ever tournament. To regular viewers this will be great news. (Whoever said TQM doesn't cover all tastes!) On that overnight note, I leave you.

Wishing you a very happy month to come, and looking forward to seeing you in 28 days. Sayonara or whatever tomorrow or later is, mate if we're getting really friendly.



Available PC-Engine variants: the Power Grafx, the Fxer Console and the



BELOW T



two-player
in a 1988
extended
to interest
but usually
it was an
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game with
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nality.

Around
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As a video
software
ever first.

One of the
first was
Bruce Lee.

It was a

variant on the

well-worn platform game sce-

nario. Negotiating the various

hazards as Bruce, it was your

task to collect all the blemishes

from the screen before pro-

gressing to the next screen. To

make the task harder two

enemy warriors were pitted

against you. In true Bruce Lee

fashion you could see flying

kicks and chops to temporarily

dispatch your opponents.

If either of these games lived
at all things to come, it was not
until June 1988 that the best-
sell-up game was really
launched. Karate Champ had
been a popular game in the
arcades, but in those days the
number of licenses was rela-
tively few. Arcade games had
to be huge hits before any soft-
ware house was prepared to
pay out money for the official
license. More often than not
unlicensed lookalike games
appeared. If they proved popu-
lar then another software
house would then try to cash in
on the fad and bring out the
official version.

In the summer of '88
Midbourne House (then an
independent software house)
launched the Way of the Exploding
Fist on an unsuspecting public.
Five games survive the test of
time to be considered classics.
Way of the Exploding Fist is
one of the exceptions. Heavily
based on Karate Champ, it pitted
the player in one against
one combat with either a com-
puter or human opponent.
Essentially it was a much bet-
ter version of Bug Byte's Kang
Fu, more moves, faster action
and superb sound effects. It
sold over 100,000 copies on
the Spectrum and over half
million across all formats.
Software houses realised
money was to be made from
beat-'em-ups. Very soon every

Origami and Bonsai grand master, Robin Candy, gets his paper weight and hedge clippers out as he prepares to do battle with the greatest beat-'em-ups and bruisers to have appeared on computer and console format.

This is probably the most
universal game to be seen
on the Spectrum for a long
while. That quote
appeared in our sister
magazine Crash in December
1988. What was it describing?
A starting new graphics
technique? The first ever driven
game? Some new puzzle
game? No, a Bug Byte game
called Kang Fu. Beat-'em-ups
have been with us for five
years now and a recent surge
in martial arts coloured games
from different publishers renewed
this love story shows that
their popularity has never been
stronger.

Kang Fu's release in 1984
was somewhat overshadowed
by another Bug Byte game,
Tarnish. At the time, nobody
realised that Kang Fu would
lead to a whole new game
genre.

Only four moves were avail-
able in Kang Fu, and one of
those was a defensive block. A

■System 3's Last Ninja, seen here on the C64, is different to traditional beat-'em-ups as it contains arcade adventuring along with more traditional slice and dice elements.



THE BELT

conservative combat sport was considered.

Going back to 1989, there were games for kick boxing, boxing, and karate (in form of karate where you beat your opponent with a stick), a paddle game which was basically Exploding Flat with weapons, and even a Judo game. However, licenses started to play a more prominent role in the selling of computer games. Under its Imagine label, Ocean released a version of Namco's arcade hit *Yie Ar Kung Fu*. It was a good conversion, particularly on the Amstrad CPC.

Perhaps the most unusual beat-'em-up license came from Granite Graphics. *Wily of the Tiger* was based on the Fighting Fantasy books of the same name. This game was split into three separate sub-games with three different forms of combat: unarmed combat (flying kicks, chops, punches and so on), pole fighting and unarmed sword fighting. Each of the games were good but the combined package made it excellent value for money. By this time beat-'em-ups were becoming very much the norm. There were no new

ideas, only the implementation of the game novel to differentiate between the games. Some had great graphics others good sound effects but all were essentially the same.

In 1987 System 3 took beat-'em-ups in a new direction with *The Last Ninja*. This game combined elements from arcade adventures with an addictive hack and slay element. From this point onwards



Classic coin-up punch-ups are to be had in the Amiga version of *Ninja Warriors*. The coin-up features three screens. Home computer owners will have to make do with one.

BEST BRUISERS

Here is TGM's all-time top five hack and slay games. At least one of these games should be part of your software collection

International Karate+ System 3

A conversion of International Karate resulted in what's regarded as the best ever beat-'em-up. The object of the game was simple – beat your opponents before they beat you. One of the novel aspects of the game is that instead of being faced with one opponent, you're up against two (either a second player and a computer opponent or two computer opponents). The strategy here – for all its simplicity – is vital. C64, S4 and Amiga versions feature a great Rob Hubbard soundtrack.

Way of the Exploding Flat Endorse House

The game that launched the whole beat-'em-up genre. Since then its original release it is still one of the best. It only ever appeared on the S400, 16-bit owners are missing out on a classic. While battling against the computer provides a challenge, avoiding the many mines in its own when pitted against a human opponent. Two two-player games are as addictive as one. Graphics are good with some nice feedback while the screaming sound effects act as a great contrast to the soothing oriental music. Not only an important landmark in games history, but a damned good game to beat!

Budokan Electronic Arts

A Star Player is our best issue in beat-'em-ups. The aim of the game is to reach the Budokan and fight in the martial arts tournament. However, before you progress to full form something changes. Hoping you've got to train in a variety of disciplines. You can fight in the championship but if you haven't trained then you won't stand a chance. When you do train you're ready to take on the best you are given a short profile on your opponent. From the given information you're got to decide which of the disciplines you've trained is best suited to tackling your opponent. So the Budokan has only appeared on the PC, as the quality of graphics is dependent on the graphics board you have installed.

Shinobi Virgin Mastertronic

Putting on the heavy stoops of Sir Francis Drake, secret agent, you have to run and jump through five horizontally-scrolling levels. Jumping between stars at all and usually level (the last level proves tricky). Knock off the monsters into the air gives extra points and abilities, the most useful of which is the Star Blade, which acts like a smart bomb. At the end of each level there's a gang leader (or leader), it's not easy. Computer conversions aren't recommended but some of the console versions are excellent. The S400 Mega version was one of the first games to earn a Star Player while the PC Engine version released elsewhere in this issue shows how the computer can sometimes out-shine computers. Although the PC Engine version is best both console versions use their machines well and accurately recreate the look and feel of the coin-up. For the best Shinobi version so far, check out the release of Super Shinobi on the Mega Mega Drive in this issue.

Ninja Warriors The Sales Game

Another recent release. Like the Electronic Arts version of the same name *Ninja Warriors* is a warrior. Faced with the evil mastery of a character called Banger, you have to kick, chop and smash your way across the world to conquer him. The levels of slaughter have to be completed before you get to face Banger. With tanks, dogs, apes and birds, winning guards in your way this is no mean feat.



Double Dragon 2 on the design puts you in control of a street fighter out for the blood of the thugs responsible for killing your girlfriend.

beat-'em-ups started to diversify, combining elements from other popular games types.

Just when we thought the old style beat-'em-up was dead (System 3 released the classic International Karate[®]). This really is the 25th anniversary

up. No scrolling screens, no flashy gimmicks – just pure unadulterated escapism violence. It took the scenario set in Exploding Fist further by adding extra equipment and more interesting bonus levels. 1600 and 30 were notable for

the increase in South East Asian beat-'em-ups. Double Dragon was disappointing, but Virgin scored a hit with an excellent version of the sequel Double Dragon II – The Revenge. The only major original game released during this time was Last Ninja 2 (also again from System 3). And so that



brings us up to date. Beat-'em-ups have been with us for five years. Just about every possible variant sport has been covered in at least one game.

So there you have it – the history of the beat-'em-up. If you flick through this month's TGM you'll notice an abundance of beat and play games and there are more planned for release over the coming months. The genre, while getting more sophisticated, still retains its appeal.

GIRLS!



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to know about Girls!
* Chatting up, kissing, *
flirting and more!

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Stateside chaos at the



When people in Las Vegas hear that a guy has jumped out of a third-storey window with a TV set under his arm, the first thing they ask is, "What size screen was it?" That's just the kind of place Nevada glitter-city is at this time of year. For January means the Consumer Electronics Show. Where all that's gold probably glitters, flashes and beeps too. Marshal M. Rosenfeld was there...

Although the Game Boy is not officially available in the UK yet, Nintendo are printing its imminent release. One Nintendo spokesman even let slip that October may be the month. However, all that, we'll keep you updated on the platform of sorts reaching out shores through the grey market.

While the CES is the forecasting mecca of Nintendo, the USA's most popular console products. And with the country's top sales among the country's strongest marketing campaigns. Within the Nintendo Land you'll find Mario beach towels, designer lunch boxes, street-art controllers, Mario three cereal... the list goes on. Nintendo at the CES serves away 30,000 eggs, hot. As one official put it: "We could have used more, but the Vegas Commission Centre isn't big enough".

Nintendo Entertainment System carts proliferate at courts, but now it's Game Boy's turn to really shine. As was the case with the Nintendo console, the producers aren't too concerned with producing Game Boy carts themselves. "Buy 'em some 200 licences to do it for them. And there's a retailer

floating around that has more Game Boys than you're produced by the end of early 1993." And unlike the first Nintendo-made ones (Tetris, Super Mario Land, etc), the third-party games feature larger sprites and more varied situations. Many go for strategy and heroism you with puzzles. Others just let you develop characters from trying to rapid-smash that last red button.

While many companies are still planning their products, a few do have the cash for enough along to view, or, in some cases, to buy.

CASTLEVANIA

— THE ADVENTURE

Konami

Bring your sword swiftly as you commence your quest: avoid fierce obstacles and vampire ogres in pursuit of the evil Count. Locate hearts, obstacles and secret crystals as you take on unending trials like the like them. Characters are large and "fat", so learning to control the floppy thing is what. Castlevania looks as great as they are deadly.

WORLD BOWLING

Remstar

Fastball in the HOT seat, you're a large area representing the alley, and

your man can be manoeuvred in four directions. Working the pegged balls up the "strength" of the ball, and the ball's release sends it on down to the pins. The game features good sound with fast moving animation, with my favourite bit happening when you get a strike — while you jump up and down, a pair of barrels for pins in Game Boy's close characters should behind you.

KEVIN

Acclaim

Kevin is a cool tomato, and in a lot of a difficult spot. He's stuck in the middle of a world of enemies with little hope of escaping — unless you can guide him. There are two games, each with three difficulty levels. Going up? Requires Kevin to realize. Kevin in order to move freely from right to left. While heading, Kevin finds enemies, more packed enemies and horizontal scrolling. Kevin's headless is provided by your girlfriend (kind of all sorts) and a timer to keep you on

THE AMAZING SPIDERMAN

UA

May Jane has been kidnapped, and it's up to Spider to rescue her. This means taking on gorillas and guys, falling bricks, and really rain among other standard villains. Each level seems coming vertically, some horizontally has an anti-villain waiting at the end. Whether it's a jump through the mean streets of New York to encounter Mysterio, or a battle on a moving subway car with the Scorpion, this is no small feat. Peter Parker's alter ego is so windy. Besides kids and parents, he can fire web shots at his foes and — in a single bound — swing to another location for escape. The game is highly entertaining, with a nice variety of items. We'll worth a look.



your toes. But the best thing is the way this Egyptian guy is always bouncing up and down, making that funny repeating sound.

DOUBLE DRAGON

Technos

Action-adventure lovers are well catered for on the Game Boy. Based on its bigger counterparts, Double Dragon is as violent and addictive as all the other versions. Three after brutal scenes of martial arts experts to dispose of. And to mention mudsuckers, flying claws, pipes and other weapons. The perfect game to play while on the New York subway.

REVENGE OF THE 'GATOR

At America

Play at present (later months) into this. The three screens of the play area are stacked vertically, flicking from one to the next. The control method suits the Game Boy's layout — simple. Walk and up through lanes, and avoid or bumpers. A bit motion spin slowly when you skip through the line lanes, and there's a chance of assuming a "step game" which keeps the ball in play on the upper ball. Drapping in the bottom level lets you get another "gator" bumping around the side, and also about the ball into one of the mouths of

three identical little guys. If you score the right guy, you go to one of the three special level screens (the others show you back to the top or place the ball in the shooting gator again). Great for here.



NEW KIDS ON THE BLOCK



Reinforce Athena (Mitsui) has the makings of a good thinkers' game. It's a port over from the NES, and is a maze game played on a fixed screen. Manuevering the hero through the checkerboard mazes of Reinforce enables you to locate pillars to buy the clues in. Simple to learn, easy to understand, and maddeningly difficult to master.

Speaking of checkerboards, Simon Bradley are about to bring out Savable. Padded in the forearms, the built-in word dictionary contains over 50,000 entries.

Continuing the strain of NES offspring, Asakura have announced the release of their immensely popular Wizards and Warriors (reviewed on the NES

this issue) for the Game Boy under the title Wizards and Warriors II: Fantasy of Peace.

Also ported from the NES is Culture Brain's King of the Kid. Plenty of characters roaming through the 32 villages in both of Jodga. There's also some interesting items to pick up, like the shoes that let you walk on water.

What about shoot-'em-ups? How about the granddaddy of them all: Space Invaders (Taito). They've been out of action for a long time, but have come the return of these military, fast-paced alien. They drop from saucers overhead, march from left to right, they speed up, then try to blow up your cannon while you duck behind bunkers and guns... it's even more of a chal-

lenge this time because everything's so small.

The third question continues to be: What? (Amiga's 2011 trying to see Game's Sales.) Many companies promise by April, but most admit that Game Boy-man won't really take off till next spring. Fortunately, those already on the shelves are quite good: like NEC's Battle and Nintendo's Super Mario Land. Some costs to appear you may have already seen, like Asakura's Madia Beach Party (based on the Ocean game), it may be hard to wait, but with so many companies working to bring us their best, there's little doubt that Game Boy is going to be the big guy on the block.



A MAD, MAD, MAD WORLD

Every CES you get your normal dose of big boys; the likes of Castle, Sharp, Sony etc. Granted, they always have something interesting to show. But where the real fun's had spluttering through the crowds to the large hatchback of smaller companies skirting the edges of the hall.

First to catch the eye is The Spy Shop. Here you can find that special something for the granddaddy who thinks he has everything. The Spy Shop contains a variety of surveillance devices, with my personal favorite being the mini-watch camera.

Behind the clock-looking, full-function, quartz LCD display, there's a focusing lens and camera mechanism within a 1/8-inch thick shell.

The camera is activated by a small switch on the side of the face, is extremely quiet, and can record seven black and white pictures on the special simulator disk. The system comes in a case complete with its own developing kit.

THE BIG BOYS

Canon's iBos series of electronic, rechargeable-accumulator based video cameras have been very popular due to their small

size and typewriter keyboard. The SP-8000 also uses a raised tactile keyboard as opposed to the flat style of the others.

There's plenty of memory to store the video. A telephone directory, diary, calculator and international time display. All those feature a wide 12 screens by six-line dot-matrix screen. Bos also has the option of downloading information to your PC through a special cable, with another enabling data to be passed between units.

The new SP-9000 Executive model takes the Sharp IQ and Pacer Organizer head-on. The flagship allows extra memory cards (512KB) and uses two utilities (like dictionaries).

We've all seen the above, plus laptops (Cambridge Computers's 286) and palmtops (Alan's Portfolio), but price and usability must come to mind. Will any really get the wireless portable Companion? It seems Proton may have the answer to our prayers with their new range of Mobile Computers.

There are three units, all 15.6in, featuring new technology in viewing and information storage. All use special information packs which replace mechanical disk drives. The result is unbelievable lightness. They weigh less than five pounds, are no bigger than an A4 magazine page, and run on a rechargeable battery pack that lasts over 50 hours.

2 NEW LYNX

The action isn't always confined to the CES arena — ah, no! Marshall took a trip over to a nearby hotel and discovered two brand new games for Atari's Lynx.

Quantum 2 plays exactly as the previous versions — with the sprites of ghosts and other scary creatures moving freely along — and features the terrific animation and color that has become synonymous in the hand-held market with the Lynx. However, due to the unique design of the third in the series, you'll have to turn your Lynx (which do you mean

lynx haven't got one yet?) 90 degrees to play it.

Chips Challenge is a bit more frenetic and stimulating than your basic scrolling shoot-the-screen blocked by locks and barriers. The little Chip character (seen from an overhead view) scurries about, picking up keys and special items. There's so much detail on all screen objects that the game creates a texture yet to be equaled in a hand-held. Chips Challenge is definitely for the thinking games player.

LYNX



ATARI



The MC180 (118K) and MC200 (256K) both have a special mouse port — basically a surface area which responds to touch and

drives an arrow around the screen. While the MC200 displays monochrome images, the MC400 uses film retardation for a high-density

black and white display. Both use raster and can multitask between applications. There are even options for speech and a faxmode. Built-in programs include a diary, database, word processor and telecommunications.

Those clearing IBM compatibility should go for the MC400. This mouse pad is replaced with a keyboard, and the graphical interface is removed in favor of the MS-DOS command line system. The black and white screen now emulates the PC's four-color CGA mode.

SIMON SAYS

Simon, as you remember, is the sight and sound game introduced ten years ago. You walked behind to an electrified pattern on the surface and then duplicated it. Now With Design in Mind's version initially looks radically

different, being that it's a series of note pads put out from a black module, like a spiral pencil. You must grab the correct pad in sequence and, depending on the type of game, rotate the camera as well.

Another device is the Sound Changer. You hold the microphone to your mouth, speak, and out comes one of 16 programmed voices — from the robot of Starliner Detective to Monkey Movie. Another version includes a cassette player, for mixing music with your new vocal chords.

All in all quite a strange menagerie of multi-task boxes at the first CES this decade. And here's hoping that most of them are released in quantity and available on the shelves of the LPi store... very soon.



SOFTWARE CITY, USA!

You don't go to America's Consumer Electronics Show to look for anything in particular. You just go to look at everything. After fiddling with all the knobs and buttons, though, it's best to have a sit down before you embark on the second round of gazing. This time, not at the computers' aesthetics, but what the machines are actually being used for. Marshal M Resenthal plays the day away...

The Consumer Electronics Show is split into two parts. At one end of the show, the North Hall, you get the hardware innovations. While twirling off from it, in the West Hall, you get the things and boxes the TGM readers have become more accustomed to. Occasionally you even get to see the odd weird person trying their luck on the latest eye-catcher. These sorts of people hardly buy the machines, though; gone back from a "games show" and they'll disappear back to the media black area, covered in

a red shade of embarrassment, so there's no problem having a fresh yourself.

Entering the West Hall feels like going to a party. The best party feels usually turn out to be Nintendo, but they've got some stiff opposition this year, not least from NEC and Sega. Both of whom are displaying their latest 16-bit console releases.

Shaped like a cross, filled with switches and buttons, Segas are promising more very hot games are being piped on the 16-bit Mega Drive (Sega's own best)

girl.

Besides a game based on Walt Disney's *Fantasia*, new titles are in production for this year's summer movies. The most predominant being the film already heralded as this year's Batman. Marvel really is Madonna in Dick Tracy. The game promises to have plenty of gangster action, with the all-American super-powered cop coming out as the hero from the film. The game also features two-time villainesses like Poison Face and Poisoness, and that good old whist racket.

Also coinciding with the film release this year is *Silverball*. The story of schoolboy Peter Parker and his fight against crime on the streets (and skyscrapers) of New York City.

Perhaps Sega's greatest coup, though, is Michael Jackson: The Video Game. Based partly on his *Thriller* and *Smooth Criminal* videos, the program was conceived with the active participation of the superstar. Fluid animation enables you to move Michael around, snapping his hat to the rhythm — while saving the children of the world. A coin-op version for the arcades is already being programmed.

IT'S JUST AN ILLUSION

MicroIllusions continue their devotion to the Amiga with a new desktop video product, *True Color Randomizer*. This allows the Amiga to produce randomised 3D graphics, sound and MIDI events. Fully compatible with Music X and other MicroIllusions products, the

NUCLEAR WAR

Now World Conquering from the Russians, the British, the Chinese, the Japanese, they're back at the NUKLEAR WAR!

NUCLEAR WAR is a strategy game. Build weapons, launch nuclear missiles, and lead all out WAR! YOUR NEIGHBOURS! Numerous computer generated scenarios are flying head-on to deal with combined with cartoon animation and a slightly off-the-wall sense of view make NUKLEAR WAR more fun than a slightly off-the-wall sense of a day.



Generator works with the professional coding system necessary to make valid and professional taping possible — which means 30FPS and EBU time codes in various modes. Onscreen software simulates all the functions of standard video hardware, plus reengineering information displays.

Nearly is the small Modigheim booth, and under one of their wings, Infusion. They're showing Circuit's Edge, a roleplaying game based on George Linger's 10-4 book. Edge is competing in the future, because people have able to modify (modify).

Domestic through the use of small ROM-ROM cards. As you move around in this futuristic and hostile world, one window shows all the action, while another reflects yourself and the people you meet. The adventure operates in a 3D environment.

Dynami's Jerry Luttrell has reviewed their A-10 and David White games last month reveals little about future prospects, although he does say that they're two programs in development: a Paul Simon World War II flight simulator program and another action/adventure game along the lines of David White's Secret Agent, but totally new device.

Championship are showing it Came From The Desert 2 and Hoods. Basically it's an add-on module to the original, and continues the battle against the dreaded mob in the future. Also on hand is TV Sports Basketball and Wings — an interactive adventure set during World War I.

STREET ATTACK!

Just out from them, ESI are showing Champions of



LETTA HUMBLES A FENCHOLESS SPELL.

■ This One Bit, alternate focus in Super Mode 3. It's a major event in the futuristic 199 game, great first game in the series and one to stay.

Kryia, an ADAM fantasy roleplaying game set in the Dragonheart world. Guide a party of characters through combat and court intrigue, in ultimately defeat the god of the evil dark quest. Characters include those found in the Pool of Radiance and Curse of the Azure Bonds, plus new monsters and mysteries.

Or try DragonStrike, the first dragon fight and combat simulation. View the skies from the back of a heroic dragon, just like flying a normal plane. This real quest title will show the full weight of the evil dragons up against you, as they attack of the weapons at hand (which include arrows, healing potions, and shields). Dragons possess their own combat powers — they're flaming breath as well as claws and teeth.

Moving back within a real, real street brings us to Incredible Light Interceptor. Jointly developed with AAA, makers of action board games, ESI's Interceptor gives you the opportunity to command a fighter squadron, guiding the pilot characters through many combat scenarios. Each adventure builds upon that which came

before, so acquiring knowledge and skills is vital. There are over 20 fighter and ship types, a powerful artificial intelligence system and more than 200 missions.

Electronic Arts are also beginning to put out more products. Skate on Ice was the first in the line, but now's the time for Ski in the Snow, an all-terrain action game which has you, amongst other crazy things, towing snowboards and skiing down slopes while avoiding chainsaw guys carrying chainsaws.

Center games you the chance to take over Rome. Designed by the same people who created Defender of the Crown, there are action-oriented chaos tasks to participate in, as well as the usual intrigue and politics. Of course, there's lots of time to spend in the field with the troops — taking on opponents and conquering new territories.

Accolade's new Courier: River Combat Simulation seems a real winner. Take to the treacherous banks of Vietnam, Colombia, Panama in a helicopter (uncontrolled, able to descend to 10-15 yards in 10 inches of water). It takes time to get used to firing while floating up and down,

but the training mode will help you get a handle on the controls. Then it's off on any of 20 missions, switching between the four positions on the boat.

Commander's Drive, Super's Mike, Super Station 3 and C. All designed with a unique "back eye" lens perspective.

It's getting around keyboards and I'm getting pickled. But before I can get going to the next press conference an unwelcome character just off the side of the boat's entrance beckons me over. He points to a console to reveal PTL's Chase Strikes Back. Continuing the battle begun in Dungeon Master, Chase brings you back within the corridors of stamp mills filled with dripping ichor. The new game also contains incomprehensible enemies, combined with digitized sounds, interaction, mini-warrior puzzles to solve and structures to find.

A DECADE OF SHIMA

Shima are busy celebrating their tenth anniversary. New games include The Colours of Magic and Conquest of Iceberg. While Conquest of Camelot is in development and takes you off in search of the Holy Grail. All the trappings of the mythical Celtic legend are portrayed, and there's even simulated combat scenes.

Seaborn is an exciting roleplaying game inspired from Japan. 10 separate adventures are contained within this universe. Both the Medusa, search for the last Talmor and more.

It's been documented that nearly 2.5 million fantasy-oriented games were sold last year in the States, some one million people getting deeply involved in roleplaying.

In this simple list a sign of things to come for UK games players. Who knows? Only the British importers and buyers can tell. Let's hope everything's given a chance in Britain, though.

LCD HAVEN

Moving from a high-end use to the bargain basement brings us to another application for LCDs.

Now, contrary to what you might think, hand-held LCD games aren't dying a quick death. In fact, they seem to be doing better now than ever. (Perhaps because the machines are so disposable

cheap now.) Konami's Passage Master Ninja Turtles is here on LCD, giving slash and burn fans a chance to try their luck in the murky underground powers.

Speaking of which, TBM? It will soon be available for home computers (Ravens have been trying to get the license), as well as a number

of other titles from Nintendo carts — including Castlevania and Blades of Steel. Other titles on black and white LCD, and direct from their arcade big brothers, include Double Defilia (basketball),

Commander and Gradius (a Space-type game). But my personal favourite is Skate On Ice, the mad game of mayhem previously released on computer from Electronic Arts over two years ago. This

movement to produce games far more than just the game consoles signals a positive sign towards computer longevity in the States.

Not to be outdone, Accolade (who release Ren's game designs, and have Miranda Worlds and Warriors are released this month), are releasing NARC (straight from the arcade), Nightfall (driving a monster truck over obstacles), King King, Combat Zone and Iron Blood.

DEEP INTO SPACE ACE

Toughest challenge of 1990? Maybe... but from the depths of frustration don't despair! TGM

gives you the lowdown for high achievement with our Players Guide to the brilliant cartoon hit Space Ace.

SCENE 1

Borl attacks on an anti-gravity platform. Move right, left and down to dodge the laser bolts.

SCENE 2

A floating robot with two staring legs tries to push Dexter into a small hole. Move right, left and left to avoid it.

SCENE 3

Dexter is chased to his ship by more floating robots. Move the stick down and up.

SCENE 4

Dexter is flying towards Borl's Space Station. Push up to avoid crashing into it.

SCENE 5

Inside the station a muck monster tries to turn Ace into lunch. Press fire to kill it.

SCENE 6

Dexter must escape from a large, crunching arm by leaping across a broken bridge to safety. Press right and up to proceed.

SCENE 7

To cross the moving platform, press left, right and right.

SCENE 8

On a rock path another monster mistakes Dexter for his next meal. Press down and right to escape its grasp.

SCENE 9

Further along the path, another local inhabitant appears with jaws gaping. Down and left gets you past him.

SCENE 10

This path's getting dangerous. Press fire to blow the next monster's head off.

SCENE 11

Dexter is dropped onto a stone bridge before two caves. Press up to escape the two cat people that come up behind you.

SCENE 12

In two maze of corridors that make up Borl's bar, Dexter is attacked by two security dogs. Press up to avoid them.



SCENE 13

The dogs are still hot on your tail, so press right to get up the intermission.

SCENE 14

Energy conduits run along this corridor. Jump up to avoid the dogs and a flooding wall.

SCENE 15

Air stands between two security robots. Run right to avoid these laser bolts.

SCENE 16

Another corridor filled with energy conduits. Hang a curious left to stay alive.

SCENE 17

A huge laser cannon stands in front of Center. Dodge left to avoid a stomach-crushing laser bolt.

SCENE 18

Boff's stronghold is almost in sight. Run right to avoid another laser blast.

SCENE 19

Don't just stand there, push up to climb that ladder.

SCENE 20

Air now faces an enraged Boof. Press fire and right to avoid Boof's flaming staff.

SCENE 21

Fire and right saves Air yet again.

SCENE 22

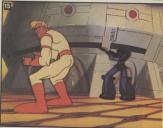
Boof swings his staff down towards Air's head. Fire and right avoids being knocked out.

SCENE 23

Air goes on the offensive, but Boof counters with a round-house kick. Fire and down avoids instant death.

SCENE 24

Air ends up flat on his back. Boof brings down his staff to finish off our hero. Press fire to deflect it.





25



26

**SCENE 25**

Back on his feet, Ace must yet again dodge Bart's staff. Up and down makes you first leap in the air and then duck.

SCENE 26

For the last time Ace must dodge the Commander's attack before leaping on his back. Right and down to mount the evil foot.

SCENE 27

Clinging to Bart's back, Ace goes small like a cat, dodging a falling to their master's aid. Pressing fire sends Ace soaring through the air to catch a nearby rope.

SCENE 28

Swinging on the rope, Ace must land on the platform Kimberly is strapped to. Be watching on this screen... have your strategy.

SCENE 29

Ace releases Kimberly, but the platform is sinking into the lava pit. Leap right to escape.

SCENE 30

With Kimberly safe, Ace must dodge Bart's Infanto Ray. Jump right to avoid the deadly pulses.

SCENE 31

Decker must now sprint left along the platform.

SCENE 32

Ace comes across a bridge filled with mirrors. Initially confusing, Ace press right to avoid another blast from the ray.

SCENE 33

Ace has an idea. Push one of the mirrors in front of the ray to deflect the perilous Infanto Ray back at Commander Bart. Press left and right to do this.

And there you have it: Bart is hit by the Infanto Ray, justly turned into a child, Earth's saved and Ace is a hero. Thanks to all our reader help and, of course, Empire.



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KILLING JOKE...



By Rob Stevens



The *Snare* is a twenty-level deadly maze built in a temporal cavity by hellspawn master Thalamus who ten years ago entered his creation with his most valued possession — and died.

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TGM TRICKS & CHEATS

Batman (The Movie) Spectrum

Steve Ross, Southwick.
You'll need a Multitap to use these tricks. Enter POKÉ 242720 for infinite time or POKÉ 246308, 200: POKÉ 242881, 201 and POKÉ 249793, 52 for infinite time and energy.

hold down the key corresponding to the level you wish to advance to (1-5). While keeping the key pressed down, click on and to exit from the high score table. Then start the game as normal.

Rampage Sega

David Silvers from Stockton, California reveals how to find a secret continue game option.

When you have lost all your lives, and the Game Over menu screen has appeared, push down both the buttons on the keypad and hey presto! the game restarts from the level the game finished on.

is to time your jumps carefully. The whale continuously jumps out of the water. Watch how it jumps. When it gets to the peak of its jump make your move and jump high over it.

The Coyote

Watch out for red flowers on the ground. When one passes off screen the coyote will make its entrance. It takes two shots to kill him but you have to be quick.

Switchblade ST

Here's a quick cheat from Adam Coombes of Chardlewell. Get onto the high score table and type POKKY. Now

tion.

BlueFoot Outpost

The red octopus bounces around on the water's surface making it hard to jump over. However, it can easily be killed with just one shot. The blue octopus is made of the same but rarely shooting balls.

The Frog

There are two varieties of frog: green and brown. The brown is the most dangerous. When it appears onscreen it will start to jump towards you. When it gets close enough, shoot it twice to kill it. If you don't have any shooting power you'll have to time your movements carefully to avoid being jumped upon.

The Mithra

The secret to avoiding contact with these dangerous creatures

New logos, more tips, less waffle. All in all, there's no doubting which is the most comprehensive tips section around — TGM Tricks 'n' Cheats, of course. No matter how small the tip, if it helps you, then we'll print it! All that and prizes too...

Adventure Island Nintendo

Can't say that I've played this one but Brandy Cuthrie from Walthamstow has. Here are his hints on how to beat those obstructive animals. The Snail

Generally harmless, literally it just gets in your way. To get rid of it shoot it.

The Cobra

Only dangerous when you have some shooting power. In which case it will spit lethal venom at you. Despatch it with either the axe or a fireball shot.

Pink Life Pigeon

If he gets in your way shoot

Turbo Out Run

CG4

Tips on US Gold's latest hit from Edward Bullock in Solihull.

1) WORKSHOP

On your first visit to the workshop buy the high grip tires then on the next visit equip yourself with the 10 power engine. Finally on your last visit get the special turbo.

2) LEVEL TIPS

Level 1 — New York An easy stage that is ideal for getting used to the turbo.

Level 2 — Washington DC Beware of the trees! The other main problem is overtaking the police cars. Accelerate up behind them, pull out either left

or right then judge them in the opposite direction.

Level 3 — Pittsburgh Be wary of the sharp corners. When you're stuck in a storm use your brakes and gears carefully.

Level 4 — Indianapolis Another fairly easy level; lots of

chances to use your turbo.

Level 5 — Chicago Night driving wouldn't pose any

problems but watch out for the bumps and the sharp bends in

the road.

Level 6 — St Louis Use the nudge tactics on the

police cars.

Level 7 — Memphis A nasty level, mind the rocks!

Level 8 — Atlanta Hardly any obstacles other than

snails so there's plenty of opportunities to use your turbo.

Level 9 — Miami Tight bends are few and far

between on this level so let rip with your turbo.

Level 10 — New Orleans The tight bends reappear on

this level. Use your gears and brakes carefully.

Level 11 — San Antonio A seriously bad level. Keep an

eye out for obstacles and use your turbo carefully.

Level 12 — Dallas Some of the corners are

unmarked so don't go overboard on the turbo.

Level 13 — Oklahoma City Your actions have to be fast on

this level, there are some extremely sharp corners.

Level 14 — Denver Probably the worst level in the

game. Take things easy. Don't go all out but keep an eye on the time limit.

Level 15 — Grand Canyon Fairly easy.

Level 16 — Los Angeles Very easy to complete consid-

ering it's the last level.

RoboCop MSX

Javier Gonzalez, Sancti Spiriti.
Shoot at the windows. Then shoot the guy on the second level and you will receive infinite ammunition.





Hard Drivin'

Amiga

If you're having problems qualifying for the big race then skip right there — use the cheat from Julian Roberts of Bedford.

1) At the start of the game drive extremely slowly and make a 180-degree turn.

2) Now follow the road under the bridge and at the fork junction take the road on the right.

3) Just before the checkpoint slow down, then go through it and make another 180-degree turn.

4) Carry on back through the checkpoints.

5) Let the time run out so that you qualify for the Championship Lap.

Strider

Amiga

Despite the attractive graphics I never really got into this game. Regardless, it's a very popular version of Capcom's sidescrap. J. McArthur of Mortlake has found a cheat.

Altered Beast

Spectrum

Steve How from Linstead Park wrote in to say, while playing the game press all the keys on the keyboard to progress to the next level.



Start the game and press F8 to pause the game. Now hold down the (H), (F), left shift and 1 keys together. The cheat mode is now activated. Unpause the game. Press number 1-5 to select different levels and F1-F4 for the different stages within each level.

Beach Volley

Amiga

Stephen Bascombe from Cornwall discovered that if you type CRACKERACEY while you're playing the game you can skip levels by pressing F1.

Galaga '88

PC Engine

A classic shoot-'em-up, it's not particularly stunning but it's hard to play solo, a must for all PC Engine owners. Mark Stansford from Northampton offers some advice on how to boost your score.

On the bonus screens (the galaxy-dancing screens) don't move your ship or fire at any of the aliens, you will receive a secret bonus.

New Zealand Story

Spectrum

Yet another cheat for Dossan's great arcade conversion. When on the title screen type in PHILLIP. This gives Kiri and Tiki improved firepower. While typing in the same thing while playing the game trans-

Treasure Island Dizzy

Amiga/ST

If you're having problems with Code Masters' great game that no longer lets Whitaker from Glaston know exactly where you've got to see all those objects. Cheat — below the old treasure — in the water. Greenfinger spade — at the grass on island two. Magic stone — at the island join an island two. Densometer and dynamite — in

the mine on island one. Axe and bible — at the bridge on island one. Back of gold coins — in the shop. Fireproof suit — in the strong-pans' case on island two. Banbury — in the ship. Gold egg — in the shop. Brass key — in the strong-pans' case. Crow bar — on the rock in the water.

ports you to the next level. Thanks to Matthew Kennedy of High Wycombe for that one.

Stormlord

Amiga

Steven Elliott, Plymouth. When the credits screen is displayed type in CRACK-ONBROCADE. A message indicating that the cheat mode has been activated then appears. Start the game as usual, press the space bar then press L to advance levels.

Battle Squadron

Amiga

Andrew Matthews, Ramsey. 1) Attack the enemy bases in the following order: two, three, one. 2) The green weapon is ideal for paper fire.

3) Player two should equip himself with the blue and yellow

weapons. 4) The game is easier in one-player mode. 5) Set the maximum time delay on the enemy shots. 6) Have only eight shots on screen. 7) Start with blue.

Stunt Car Racer

All formats

Racing games seem to be at the nape of the moment with Power Drift, Turbo Out Run, Road Drivin' and the forthcoming to them all, MicroProse's Stunt Car Racer. But this reminds me of my favourite just for the sheer fact you can give the other drivers a little ending so to speak every ten seconds. Thanks go to Jason Brider from Chippingham for this set of tips.

GENERAL TIPS

Before racing it's a good idea to practise first. That way you can get a good feel for the controls. In the lower divisions you can

Mickey Mouse

Nintendo Game Boy

At last, some tips for the Game Boy. Gareth Broder from Edgworth has mastered Mickey Mouse and here are the codes for all 88 levels.

3) 82W3	18) 2222	33) 122W	57) 1222	87) 2222
3) 2222	20) 2122	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
4) 2222	21) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
5) 2222	22) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
6) 2222	23) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
7) 2222	24) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
8) 2222	25) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
9) 2222	26) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
10) 2222	27) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
11) 2222	28) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
12) 2222	29) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
13) 2222	30) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
14) 2222	31) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
15) 2222	32) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
16) 2222	33) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W
17) 2222	34) 2222	33) 22W	57) 22W	87) 22W

INDIANA JONES

and the last crusade



All formats

The second of three installments of my tip. Thanks go to Russ van Haver from Amberg and Christopher Hoot from Tredridge for the maps.

THE CASTLE OF BRUNWALD

Enter the castle and knock out the butler. Go north and search the room until you find a drunk German soldier. Talk nicely to him and you will be rewarded with information about the castle. Offer to get him another drink and he will give you his stain cloth. Now go to the room with the burning fire and the bag of beer. Use the stain with the top coat, use the stain with the red coat, then use the stain with the top coat again. When the stain from the fire has gone, pick up the coat and leave. Go back to the entrance to the castle.

MAP 2

Give the stain to guard one. Go through the door one and pick up the German's uniform that he leaves. Really it is a room with a fireplace. Push the first statue and a secret passage will be revealed. Close it again (you'll find it useful later in the game). Leave the room. Say to guard two: 'Hi, I'm selling the leather jacket. I've got authorization.' 'Hi Marks, just the thing for a guard.' Go up the stairs.

MAP 3

Go through door one. Open and examine the chest. Use the German's uniform then leave the room. Give the painting that you took from Henry's house to guard three. You will see a sequence about a post card and

a combination. Remember where the form is kept. Go through door two. Open the chest and look inside. Examine the uniform; you should now have a key. Change back into Indiana and leave the room. Go back downstairs and return to the place where you found the German's uniform. Use the lever key in the clothes lock and pick up the grey uniform. Leave the room. Go back up the stairs, change into the grey uniform then enter room one. Beat up guard four, go through door three and use the first aid kit. Leave room and go up the stairs.

MAP 4

Say to guard one: 'Goddie, your pants are unbuttoned.' And no to remove the stain on your jacket. 'Leave. You better find a new one!' Go through door one. Give the meat bowl to the dog and take the trophy. Remember the animation sequence where the post was broken? Get the post. Now go back to the kitchen where you originally found the beer to remember to change into Indiana before going down stairs. Fill the trophy with beer from the tap. Go back upstairs (remember to change into the grey uniform) and give the trophy to Bill. When he fills himself with the trophy knock him out with a quick punch. Now go and beat up guard two and go through door two. Look through the window and pick up the silver key hanging from the chandeliers. Use the silver key in door three. An alarm will sound and General Vogel will come and find you. Hand the Great Diary over to him. You will then find yourself led to a chair with Henry. Save the game here. To free yourself, push the

chair so that they line up with the large axe so that when Indy kicks the chair it cuts through the ropes (that's why it is advisable to save the game just in case you don't get it right first time). Once free, push the body of the statue on the set of the fireplace then leave through the secret passage. Go right and use the motorcycle.

On your way to Berlin you will stop at a checkpoint. Say the following to the guard: 'That is out of the question'. The only players I can find are these marks. Give him the money and then say 'Here is \$5 Marks'. You will now be allowed through the checkpoint.

When you arrive at Berlin, Elsa will give you the Great Diary back. You will soon run into Hitler. Give him the pass and he will sign it for you. You now have a valid travel pass. Go to the airport.

There are several ways of completing the next section. If you have enough money you can buy the tickets for the

Zeppelin or you can steal the tickets from the man in the blue coat. To do this, get Henry to ask the man about his grandchild then while the man is telling him you go to pick his pockets. If you do get on the Zeppelin there are two many guards to fight so try the instead. Steal the tickets that is outside the terminal. To start it you must push all the switches on, move the dial to 8, click on the last indicator to make it green, put out the 'F' level and black book, push in and put out the 'F' level until the arrow on the dial points to green, push in and put out the black book three times then push the red start button.

After you have obtained the plane read the blue card. Each time that you are stopped at the checkpoint show the guard your travel pass. He will let you through providing it is signed by Hitler. You will now be in Iskenderan but you will have to wait until next issue for the rest of the solution.

The Untouchables

C84

Thanks to Martin and Jonathan Griffin, Haywards Heath.

LEVEL 1 — THE WAREHOUSE

Capone's thugs are colour-coded according to what they drop when shot.

Light blue — no bonus.

Light green — either a red or a light green is dropped. When collected your health is restored to either 100% or 50%.

Dark green — a white sand is dropped. When collected your time is increased by one minute.

Grey — a gun case is dropped. When collected your gun is enhanced, though the number of bullets is halved.

White — these are Capone's look-alikes. When shot several times 10% of the evidence is dropped. Hunt these characters down until you have collected all the evidence. You will then go onto level two.

When you start the game try to make sure that the second thug you shoot is dark green. You will find the extra time useful.

Once you have collected over 50% of the evidence the game gets harder. Capone's thugs now need to be shot more than once unless you have the pink gun. Capone's look-alikes will also become harder to shoot as they will be

able to run to another part of the warehouse.

To not to collide into the look-alikes as they will disappear, only to return later, this waiting valuable time. If you do not collect the evidence as soon as it is dropped, one of the other thugs will pick it up and become a look-alike.

LEVEL 2

— THE BRIDGE

To complete this level you must shoot Capone's handmen until the baseball bat on the status panel is fully depleted — all four of your characters must survive the shoot out. You don't have to collect any items on this level so just keep an eye on your time and your characters' health. You will find this level easier to complete if your joystick has an auto-fire option.

LEVEL 3

— THE ALLEYS

You have to be quick on the draw to complete this level. You are equipped with a double barrel shotgun and will find yourself continuously reloading. To avoid being shot when reloading always reload in a backstreet by moving the joystick to the far left. To progress to level four all characters must survive. If one character is low on energy, switch to the character with the most energy.

Operation Thunderbolt

Amiga

Mark Lawrence from *Basilisk* supplied this cheat for Ocean's Christmas hit. Follow the instructions in the ROM statements and when the game loads you will have infinite lives.

10 D0M C0D1G (255)
20 F0R M V E T0 B0
30 R0M A0 A V M (F M F A5)
40 C0D E N (24 A)
50 N0 RST X

60 CHAT WAMP

70 C0D E N

80 C0D E N

90 C0D E N

100 R0M T Y P E I N T H I S L I S T .

110 A N D S A V E F0R F U T U R E

U S E

120 R0M I N S E R T O P E R A T I O N

130 T H U N D E R B O L T D I S K A N D

140 R U N T H I S P R O G R A M

150 R0M C0D E N S H O U L D

160 L0A D A S U S U A L W I T H I N F

170 M I T E L I V E S

180 D A T A 00FF 2C7E 038A

4E4E F0B8 2200 5280 6772
110 D A T A 80FA 00FF 5AF0
0400 4200 3AC7 80C8
4E4E

120 D A T A FEDA 2AC0 2AED

394D 0008 580D 4290 40FA

130 D A T A 8088 1A8C 030A

2B7C 8078 080A 41ED 3838

140 D A T A 2848 0005 41FA

8088 7300 7200 418A 008A

150 D A T A 8FAF F84A 4A8D

8E2A 7000 5A0C 4128 708D

160 D A T A 40F8 0807 008D

517C 267D 034D 8008 267C

170 D A T A 543C 4A65 000C

267C 312C 738A 005A

4E4E

180 D A T A 008C 4E7F 40FA

083C 304D 807C 294C 8E38

190 D A T A 4248 000C 220C

008D 0A8D 8024 337C 8038

200 D A T A 807E 400C F028

347C 018C 888A 8973 80C0

210 D A T A 8455 7658 8385

000C 300C 000C 000D 0008



get away with the occasional cheat but don't expect to be a success in the higher divisions unless you're an expert on each level.

Use your turbo boost in even amounts, don't go oversteering as that at the time — you'll only end up losing control of the car. Use a bit extra at the start of the race so that you can overtake your opponent.

Don't knock your opponent when you're in contact. The chances are you'll end up spinning off the track too if the only way you can overtake him is by ramming him, try to nudge him from the side rather than turning into the back of him.

Finally, after you've taken a jump remember to take your finger off the fire button until you've landed — you only waste valuable boost points.

TRICKY

OPPOSITION

White Kid At the start of the race follow him at a safe distance. Watch how he drives to

give you ideas of what to expect when you try to overtake him. Near the end of the course, use your boost so that you are directly behind him — he should almost fill your field of vision (you'll need to have a good knowledge of the track). Now pull either left or right, accelerate and you're away.

Hot Rod Similar to the White Kid but don't forget that you shouldn't try to overtake till the end of the course.

The Dodge One of the hardest opponents. The only real tip is to try and ram him out of the way.

Big Kid Has a habit of pulling wheelies whenever you get near. The best place to overtake him is on the jump. When you get near it, speed up and jump over him.

Devil The hardest of the lower order drivers but if you're good and know the track you can fool it as he tends to ram you on the outside. It takes some nerves and a good bit of skill.

Myth

All formats

All the way from Martin Woods in Helsinki.

LEVEL ONE: PART ONE

Kill all the harpies and collect the fireballs. Now go to the platform down from where you attack the skeletons and are drops a sword. Collect this and cut loose the skeleton. Follow it. Now attack a skeleton. During the fight, its head should get cut off and fall into the flames. A demon will now emerge. Kill this with the fireballs and collect the talent it leaves behind. Find the chess and use the talent. Exit to part two.

PART TWO

Run along until you find a lady. Kill her with your sword. Now carry on until you see a statue. Hit this so that it makes a sound then continue hitting it until a shield appears. Collect this and exit to part three.

PART THREE

Carefully find the window. Use your shield to get close to her then cut her head off. Collect this and use it as a weapon to fight the Hydra.

LEVEL TWO: PART ONE

Keep, just watch out for the bird that kill it.

PART TWO

Kill all the monsters and collect the daggers left behind. At some point your sword will disappear. Don't worry, an even more powerful weapon will appear. When you find the woman pick up the sword (real to her and use it to kill the Imps. A dragon will now appear. Slice your sword into it three times. Now throw a couple of daggers into its neck and run past onto the next part.

PART THREE

Run up the platform and you

will arrive at a castle door guarded by a shadowy figure. Kick the eye and continue on up. Use a dagger to take out the next eye then cross the drawbridge. To progress to the next level there are many daggers as possible at the man in the chair.

Dragon Spirit

PC Engine

Pat Hols, Market

Hatfield

There is a secret continue option on the game which can be accessed with the following procedure.

On the title screen hold down either fire button then press the other. You should now have a short beep indicating that the mode is in operation. Now play the game as normal. When the game finally ends you will be presented with the continue option.

Monty on the Run

GBA

A classic game that has recently been rereleased under the Naxos budget label. If you don't already own it rush out now and buy it. It's a bargain not to be missed. Colin Ross from Loughborough reminds us all how to find the infinite lives cheat.

Play the game as normal, obtaining a good enough score to register on the high score table. Then type in I BBAAT TG CHEAT. Now start the game again and progress to the first screen. On the second screen there is a stretch of water which you normally have to jump over. This time there is a foot on it. Jump onto the foot and you will be awarded with infinite lives.

SOFTWARE

Want to earn yourself £30 of software of your choice and a stylish TGM T-shirt? Okay, so you're not so sure about the T-shirt (you could always use it as a dustier or if you've got exceptionally big hands it would make a great glove puppet) but the software would come in useful. This month the software prize hasn't been awarded to anyone because no-one sent in a good enough set of tips. Send your tip (and magnet) to TGM Tricks 'n' Cheats, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 10B.

WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK OF TGM ANYWAY?

Have you a passionate opinion about TGM? Do you know how to make the world's most happenin' magazine better? Or do you just want to win lots of free software? Whatever the case, there's no need to take to the waterlogged streets of Ludlow, chanting slogans against the Newsfield secret police. No, all you need to do is get out a pen and fill in the form below. We want to know what you really think of TGM, so be truthful, honest and remember to include your address. The first two entries drawn out of a hat will win £50 software vouchers, while the next five get TGM goodies including a binder, T-shirt and Le CnC camera! So get writing now and tell us!!

CUT OUT PAGE

1. Are you **MALE** ☐ **FEMALE** ☐

2. How old are you _____

3. Are you ☐ **CEO**
☐ **AT HOME**
☐ **COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY**
☐ **WORKING FULL TIME**
☐ **WORKING PART TIME**
☐ **IF YOU WORK WHERE**
 your occupation _____
4. **UNEMPLOYED**
☐ **OTHER** — please state: _____
5. How is your weekly income:
☐ **UP TO £50** ☐ **£50-75** ☐ **£75-100**
☐ **£100-150** ☐ **£150-200** ☐ **£200-250**
☐ **£250-300** ☐ **£300-400**
6. On average, how many other people read your copy of TGM _____

7. How do you get TGM:
☐ **SUBSCRIPTION**
☐ **RECEIVED OR DELIVERED BY**
☐ **EMPLOYMENT**
☐ **OFF THE SHELF AT WORK/STUDENT**
☐ **OFF THE SHELF AT ANOTHER TYPE**
 OF SHOP (please state type) _____

8. Which other magazines do you buy:
☐ **NO**
☐ **Other**
☐ **IT/Amiga Action**
☐ **Computer & Video Games**
☐ **How Computer Express**
☐ **The One**
☐ **Zen**
☐ **ESAP**
OTHER (please specify) _____

9. Do you use your computer for anything other than playing games?
☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**
 If yes (please state other uses) _____

10. Do you intend to buy a new computer or games console in the next six months?
☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**
 If yes (please specify make and model) _____

11. On average how much do you spend on computer games every month?
☐ **£0-5** ☐ **£5-10** ☐ **£10-15** ☐ **£15-20**
 If more than £20 please specify _____

12. Which type of software do you usually buy:
☐ **Single** ☐ **Full price**

13. Of all the titles and publishers, you can own a result like to own, which three do you think are the most important:

14. Where do you usually buy your software:
☐ **SPECIALIST COMPUTER STORES**
☐ **CHANGING STORES (WH. SMITH, BODLEY'S ETC.)**
☐ **MAIL ORDER**

15. What is the major influence on your decision to buy a computer game:
☐ **A REVIEW IN THE**
☐ **OTHER MAGAZINE (REVIEWS)**
☐ **ADVERTISING**
☐ **BUYER'S PROGRAMMING TEAM**
☐ **PRODUCER IN SOFTWARE HOUSE**
☐ **PRICE**
☐ **PREVIEW OR OTHER (OFFICIAL, MENTION)**

16. What type of game do you enjoy playing in order of preference: 1 is highest, 6 is lowest?
 _____ **Adventures** _____ **Situations**
 _____ **Adventure Adventures** _____ **RPG**
 _____ **World Strategy** _____ **Strategy**
OTHER (please specify) _____

17. Please award marks out of ten for each of the following features in TGM:
 _____ **Advertisements** _____ **Preview Features**
 _____ **Games Features** _____ **Reviews**
 _____ **Our View in Japan** _____ **Fun**
 _____ **Adventures** _____ **Full Shipping**
 _____ **Competitions** _____ **Mail**
 _____ **Best Buy** _____ **Reader Page**
 _____ **Graphics**

18. On your top reading five games in TGM features:
☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

19. Please rate TGM's coverage of software out of ten:
 _____ **None** _____ **Previous** _____ **Next**

20. Do you like the index style?
☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

21. Are the reviews detailed enough?
☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

22. Are the reviews long enough?
☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

23. Are there enough previews?
☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

24. Are the comments detailed enough?
☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

25. How often do you agree with the ratings?
☐ **Always** ☐ **Usually**

- ☐ **Rarely** ☐ **Seldom**

26. Do you use TGM as a source of reference when buying software?
☐ **Always** ☐ **Sometimes** ☐ **Rarely**

27. Do you subscribe to Microsoft/CompuLink or any other alternative MS? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

28. Which of the following do you object to seeing in TGM?
☐ **Contents indexes** ☐ **Article coverage**
☐ **Reviews** ☐ **PSM**

29. Do you own a CD player? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO**

30. Are there any other areas of computer feature you'd like to see more coverage on:

31. Do you use TGM as a source of reference when buying software?
☐ **Always** ☐ **Sometimes** ☐ **Never**

32. What are your favourite features in TGM:

33. What type of computer/console do you own?

34. If you were Editor of TGM for a day what would you change or include? (You may use another sheet of paper if you wish)

Now cut out this page (or a photocopy) and send it to: TGM Questionnaire, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB. Get your opinions here by April 15, for a chance to be heard, taken seriously and — most importantly — to WIN a prize!

Make sure we know where to send your prize, should you win — fill in your name and address below:

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

INDUSTRY WITHOUT



PETE LYON: ARTIST

By way of a brief personal introduction, I would describe myself as an argumentative, ex-hipster, dissenter who hates football. My schooling lay name was a

to a Catholic Grammar School and creative vandalism. From an early age I drew obsessively and despite an interest in science, eventually found myself with a degree in Fine Art/Painting. After a long list of jobs and hours of poverty I amalgamated various Christmas presents to acquire a 144 Speccy and was immediately hooked. I was — still am — doing a variety of graphic odd-jobs, book covers and illustrations, but my real ambition was to become a programmer.

The many hours wasted playing addictive games convinced me that I could come up with game graphics the equal of anything



around. The possibilities of animating my pictures at even creating whole worlds of imagination was intoxicating to a long-standing science-fiction fan such as myself. At this stage I had never even attempted a colour image as I had only a monochrome monitor and no TV modulator. Answering an ad in the press, I was put in contact with Steve Oak who immediately demanded that I demonstrate my worth. I produced an aerial picture, being completely unfamiliar with the art package and hang-over.

Nevertheless, I must have shown some talent because we subsequently collaborated on games such as Mar-

sis Kid 2, Goldrunner, Genesis and Leatherneck. These were published by Microdeal for whom I also produced the graphics for Tangletree, Airball, International Soccer and Knight Night.

Since then I have come up with the graphics for many companies, principally Miramax and Hewlett. These include Asteroth, Blaster and Scorpian.

This last year or so I have not been nearly as active. Almost a case of burnout you might say. Being a freelancer has its drawbacks; months of work can be wiped out if the programmer fails to adequately implement the original game design by either misreading or sticking the graphics all together, as going dramatically over the deadline and incurring the monumental wrath of the commissioning company. I'm sure they mean about the artist, too!

There are many people who are very good at drawing but who are not very good at programming. This is a common problem in the industry. The artist must be able to communicate with the programmer and understand the technical requirements of the game.

The problem with any attempt to teach a procedure as non-verbal as drawing is that the artists themselves have little idea how they achieve what they do. No doubt this has something to do with the many unique, individual statements involved when constructing a piece of art. There are, however, various tricks of the trade, even if these aren't any hard and fast rules.

A picture is conceived, broadly, in one of two ways, either as a complete entity, just popping into your mind as it were, or as an extended improvised doodle. Both approaches can be facilitated by judicious use of the typical features of any graphics package. (One of the most useful of all of these is the 'undo' button.) Furthermore, many packages enable the image to be edited at various stages or quickly saved to RAM disk. This allows for experimentation without messing up the bits you're pleased with. You can try out a new position or feature and learn as you go, refining your steps if you run into difficulties. Definitely not possible with conventional art techniques!

DON'T LOOK FOR PERFECTION

The mistake many novices make is trying to achieve perfection first time. The picture should be built up layer by layer, almost like bringing the thing into ever sharper focus. The old masters built up works in stages, starting out with crude black and white sketches (the Caravos) and superimposing an increasingly refined image by successively burning and fading the content of the previous stage (doodling), overpainting and finally applying ever more transparent layers of paint (glazing). This approach is made much more flexible using a computer as the whole image can be broken up into discrete elements then only assembled

ART IS BRUTALITY

John Ruskin
22 February 1979

Are you a brute or a maestro? Think you have the drop on paint when it comes to computer creation? Then brush up your technique with Pete Lyon, one of Britain's top graphic designers on the computer...

later. In other words, the whole process is best considered as a logistical exercise, the parts such as foreground and background being treated differently and ideally in an optimum sequence. I have attempted to demonstrate this in a sequence of simple pictures showing the stages leading to a finished piece (The Daily Star sequence).

The choice of palette is important. It is really because of the limited colour displays of some computers, a careful balancing act. The colours are chosen on either a logical basis, ie, the sky is blue, the grass is green, etc, or as sequences or ranges of shades from dark to light — all depending on the nature of the intended picture. The latter allows you to produce more rounded, smoother shapes using the fine gradations of colour to define the mass, shape, shade and texture of the object. You will also need intermediate shades to reduce and blur the inevitable jagged edges resulting from the relatively low screen resolution on home computers (anti-aliasing). The main feature of a picture, such as a figure in the foreground, has the majority of the colours made available to it; usually five variations on ochre, yellow and pink for flesh tones; whereas you can often get away with a single-colour silhouetted background. So don't use up the bulk of your precious colours doing fancy details in the sky, leaving only a few for the noble

eye. The thing is, though, that their use is easily detectable and tends to devalue the worth of an image. We all seem to prefer a hand-crafted article to that of a machine-generated one for deep and mysterious reasons beyond the scope of this article. In the past I have even had pictures dismissed scornfully as being 'merely' digitised when in fact they were not and had involved considerable time and effort on my part.

Drawing also has a place in the analysis of movement as an aid to animation, but again the effort of consistently redrawing each frame can be counter-productive. The early animators used a similar technique of tracing live action called 'kinescoping'. It's useful for examining the orientation of complex objects from different angles, such as a rotating spaceship. But in this instance a 3D CAD package is more useful, on the other hand it is more expensive.

Animation is best approached by first drawing a key frame, possibly from different angles. Next, two or three key frames at the extreme ranges of movement, then the 'intermediates', often using lots copied from previously rendered frames. The sequence is previewed and adjusted accordingly. It's a good idea to decide by how many pixels per frame the character is to move and then make sure the legs or wheel wheels look onto the ground and move across at exactly the right rate. A common source of information are the books of the pioneer photographer... Muybridge, published by Dover... everyone gets from there.

LIAISING WITH THE PROGRAMMER

In producing the graphics for a game, I am very much restricted by the legitimate demands of the programmer. He will set lim-



'Woman on Beat'



'Walking on animation (above) and 'Montage'



DIGITISING DILEMMAS

Almost as old as Art itself is the artist's dodge. It goes back to the use of the Camera Obscura in the 15th century or tracing of shadows on the cave walls in Neolithic times. The use of the digitiser therefore has its home-outside precedents. Scanners or digitisers are a useful short-

WHAT HARDWARE

To achieve anything like adequate graphics on a 'home computer', the machine must be at least 16-bit and support at least 256 colours. It must also be, by definition, affordable by the average-waged family, which means in practice below £1000 for a basic system. Briefly, this means the three 'A's: Architecture, Amiga and Atari ST, with the possible inclusion of an expanded IBM PC clone (Anastasy).

The Amiga (just about essential in order to be fair with its excellent performance: 320x256 with 256 enhanced colours, or 640x256 and 16 colours, is capable of much more, but that means expensive monitors and expansion cards).

Super fast colour FX can be achieved from an excellent onboard SAGC, however, the software base is improving, but you are still out on a limb regarding the latest hottest game releases. If you have any educational connections then it's worth considering.

A PC compatible is a good option, but it must be sporting an enhanced graphics card, which makes it as expensive with similar graphic capabilities to the Amiga, although not nearly as powerful.

Then there are the ST and Amiga. I would say the Amiga wins out over the ST for colour work, having the same screen resolution but a larger display area.

There's also the really easy-to-use 64 colours, compared to the ST's 16. And, of course, the HiM mode on the Amiga, boasting some 4096 possible shades, but it's restricted to one and lies up the processor, good for digitised pictures, though.

The ST can be treated to produce some crisp colours, but again there are penalties involved in its ease of use. Where it scores over the Amiga, apart from being the cheapest of all these machines, is in monochrome. If desktop publishing is your burning passion then this is really your best bet, having a screen resolution of 640x480 and some excellent software support.



'Stun' that in progress (above) and before (below). Notice Point B in action (releasing Spider-Candy's claw)

ations of colour usage, space and block size, and the number of these to be drawn, based on his own method of programming that particular game's features. It's so easy to draw me if the main character is too small! The amount of creative input I've allowed varies, but normally it is my job to come up with an overall style for a game and then try to fit it all the elements. Like the approach I have described earlier, I try to do representative sketches of all parts of a game: main sprites, background blocks, status panel, high score table, lifebars, loading screen or the sequence and effects (weapons, explosions, etc). Other changes are made in the course of producing the game and I therefore pay to not develop each element too much and allow for possible changes. Test versions and mockups of the game's art also help all concerned to monitor progress and check whether

the separate pieces work together.

The background blocks are then assembled into a map using some quality piece of software provided by the programmer. They often like to do this entirely themselves because the gameplay is dependent on the exact disposition of these blocks, however since I draw them and often have a more developed visual imagination, I prefer to do this myself. This whole procedure is interrupted by the commissioning software house demanding demo copies which are always late and consequently the involves delayed money (I'll need this to buy food).

All pictures in main article (excluding box below) by Pete Lyons



TOOLS OF THE TRADE

I have used all of the home computer mentioned within the article at one time or another. Design, Draw and Paintworks are the packages I started with on the ST.

Now that it has built-in animation features, I find I use Deluxe Paint II on the Amiga for games work even though it does not support HiM. For this I go to Photodisc as I can have screens in different modes simultaneously, enabling me to easily interchange images. I find it best to sketch in half-height mode and add extra effects in HiM later. There are other excellent packages but you get used to operating one and can see it quickly.

Relaxing any other system involves acquiring alternative work habits, slows you down and can be frustrating. And the different mouse button protocols can be irritating. It's worse than relearning the gear change or indicator switch positions on an unfamiliar car, everything's fine until you remember the roundabout is just four.

Script 3-D (Amiga) is

about the best for the limited amount of coloured 3-D work I do. Combinations of DIB, Draw and Paintwork enable me to transfer files between the ST and Amiga with relative ease. I really need someone to knock me up a cable and software to perform this chore... any offers?

In the DTP field, I have Mega ST 2 with DMMouse printer, running either Calamus or Signum software.

I use either the Silicon Animation Machine (ST) or Digiview (Amiga) to digitise. Realtime digitisers are best for general usage. Recently

Romb's Mini-Amiga/ST has proved to be cheap and effective. A good, high-resolution mouse is vital, as I find graphics tablets awkward simply because of space limitations. It can make it difficult to tap the keys for all these important shortcuts. In general, I tend to under-use all the extra goodies available to me and stick to simply drawing the image straight onto the screen, never sketching out things on paper beforehand. This is despite a determination to keep my more traditional skills in good working order by taking on the odd book-cover commission.



WARNING



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Ant attack

CD technology is no longer a thing of the future — as many PC Engine owners will testify. You too can have real music and megabytes of graphics now, today, and in your own home. While at the recent CES Show in Las Vegas, Marshal M Rosenthal stepped back to the Fifties and forward in technology to take part in the NEC/Cinemaware project that brings it Came From The Desert to PC Engine CD-ROM owners.

Technology has moved a long way since we first marvelled at the technological boundaries passed when the Atari 2600 displayed four sprites instead of two. CD-ROMs feature two-tone music. Not to say things have progressed much in reality.

But, nowadays, technology rarely sells itself, rather a very big marketing machine. Sometimes we get amazing boundary-pushers like the Amiga, and other times we can get the Game Boy. A machine that could hardly be described as an advance in technology, but still a fun little gadget with a high perceived value — hardly at the cutting edge of technology, though. However, what's important is that innovations continue.

The latest piece of ground-breaking hardware is undoubtedly NEC's PC Engine known in the States as TurboGrafx-16. Its innovative interactive CD player, Munk has been used about the speed of the system, the great gaming that it offers the fact that it's an 8-bit machine and the wide range of peripherals. The additional CD player adds megabytes of information and high-quality digitized sound effects and music. But the best is yet to come.

NEC ENTER THE CINEMA

Take a step forward to the Rialto Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada. Ignore the teeming masses, breaking kind as they focus their giggist eyes on slot machines whirling without end. Further down the endless halls, take us to the Grand Ballroom and into what appears to be a television set, with video equipment, scaffolds, cameras and cables snaking to and fro. What we're looking at — and about to see in action — is a new process that can digitize people and sound and place them onto CD discs. The final output being outstanding video/audio interfaced with computer graphics for incredibly realistic game environments.

And it's for (you big surprise) the NEC Engine. The project is the result of a marriage between NEC and Cinemaware. It seems natural — as the quality of interactive gaming has been a standard pushed ever higher by the Californian company. I take out a few minutes to wrap stories

with Cinemaware President, Bob Jacob (we went to the same school), and notice that his eyes are gleaming with delight as he promises that I won't be disappointed.

Cinemaware intend to demonstrate the system using a member of the audience. I wonder who it will be. 'Me, me, I speak, while shooting two fellow competing journalists to the floor (hey this is America). And because I'm so special, attractive and personable such a magnetic personality (and a Jet Maguire), they choose me. (Okay for real, it's because I lusted the technician a few minutes ago.) But you don't get to be at the forefront of technology without listening to David Marston, Director of the Interactive/Entertainment Group for Cinemaware. He explains to the full-throated audience all about the history of the development, and why it came to be.

'One at Cinemaware comes from a diverse background, with many of us — including myself — having television and movie experience. The idea of true 'immersion' requires many things — chooses to make, creative leaps to take, but mostly the ability to do more than just suggest better 'real' game playing. You have to be able to move past the interface and get into the game.

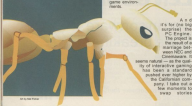
'This has not been easy to do,' notes Marston, 'especially when dealing with computer graphics — images that are approximating reality. Regardless of how astounding, they are not actual life. True, it Came From The Desert is awesome on the Amiga, but that's not the end of the road. This is where the CD-ROM comes into action, and where what we call Multi-Media begins.

'CD-ROM is a device which can translate images as well as sound from a compact disc into a computer. These images can be manipulated to an extent, but they're not the last word in a rapidly moving technology.

FROM SET TO SCREEN

How all of this works is related both in traditional film techniques as well as computerized ones. As Marston points out, 'photo-real' is created by having actual voices and sound, plus video-quality screen images. The set features an approximation of the live Cinemaware is using for the project. The large green screen is the backdrop for the actors to appear against. Video cameras enable the actor's image to be 'dropped' onto another scene — similar to placing a paper doll onto a painting. The green behind the actor doesn't 'read' as the video signal passes through, and so disappears.

Marston continues: 'Using CD-ROM as the working medium gives us the capacity to hold the huge amount of data required for 'photo-real' gaming, and, of course, preserves the necessary fast scrolling time. Full video animation fits about 30 frames a second. It's a bit jerky at times but not



Attack!!



readily noticeable because of all that's going on. Our video backgrounds replace computer art for scenes that are easy to look at, the old a lot of testing for audio and came up with a frame rate of 15-20 — 3 sounds terrific. Overall, through careful manipulation of the scenes, we are able to create the proper environment and lip-sync the voices with the images. Also keep in mind that the graphic and sampling abilities of the PC Engine help to take some of the load off what we are producing with CD-I.

Getting to that point means turning finished video into digitized images. This is done by taking the tape (shot on professional Betacam per S. Sawa) and feeding the RGB outputs into a PC that does the conversions in real-time — chugging away to turn it all into 256 colours, which will later be reduced to 16. Of course, it's all

happens after the actors have been successfully taped.

Rosman explains that the technology is still in development, and what will be seen today can be called 'talking heads', as computer sprites are still rudimentary. But what will you see going into moving on a video background, and hear actual voices," he vows. "It's great!"

LIGHTS, CAMERAS, ACTION

So now it's time to demonstrate the system. Before I get to my starting role, Rosman introduces the actress who plays the crazy, out-there leader's flirty blonde daughter, the kind who gives a new meaning to the term loose cannon. He gives us a demonstration of how the two 16-bit act in the cameras in order to convey information,

Then displayed are the necessary alternate scenes for each action we might take in the game. This is the 'branching' found in interactive games.

Finally, I get up and stand opposite her (considering the reaction from the crowd, even computer journalists recognise an attractive woman when they see one). A video camera is aimed our way, and we can see two technicians seated to our left, one operating the video-imaging, the other watching the graphic interface. We act out a sequence where an anti-approach — she looks the gun and I raise that sucker with the first shot. (Timorous applause.) Of course we didn't see anything but the green background through all of this (though the female going off when I fired made me jump). Playing back the videotape of the sequence, we can see how our images are superimposed onto its mountain scene (this, coming from another 'CD-I', with the computer graphics and also fed in. She points to the art. I take the gun and aim it at the jet which is hovering menacingly near. I fire. The jet drops dead. Heat!

And keep in mind that we've many more projects in the works. When we ask him what they are, he smiles a wall and goes — showing for the advent of CD-I (the Philips CD graphics player with real TV images), a means irrevocable possibilities for television. CD-I is made to produce video effects, with two pieces of video being currently handled. Not only can full-motion be enabled, such as what was demonstrated by NEO, but in 256 colours as well.

There's no denying that compact disc technology — whether it's existing CD-I or the upcoming CD-I — is opening up a whole new visual experience for gaming, bringing the kind of power and playability that borders on being part of a movie or television show. Perhaps one day we will all have the ability to put ourselves into a video game. Tracey Oh, dear reader.

Above: Marshall Rosman and co-starring blonde Tanya prepare to take up the role in this fully-digital screen play. Below: Dimension's studio in real life as it was seen at the recent CES.





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THE ULTIMATE ENGINE EXPERIENCE

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

There was a young man from Japan
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We brought you the first stunning pictures of the PC Engine and now you've seen the latest Japanese games machine — the Super Grafx. The mindblowing PC Engine II. So who better to collaborate with than the first UK company to import the PC Engine, Shropshire-based Micromedia. Micromedia's version of the new NEC Super Grafx is so impressive (see page 82) that we're giving one away! This is undoubtedly one of the world's best consoles and here's how you can get your hands on it...

Scattered around the page are screen shots of five whizzo PC Engine games. Just identify each picture, placing your answers on the form below, fill in the tie-breaker timetable, and send off the form to the usual address and you could be playing Japan's hottest machine very soon!

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Aviation expert, Paul Rigby takes quill in hand and reveals exclusive information on the ultimate air traffic controller, wonders where Carmen Sandiego has gone, and discloses the details of the latest adventure PART!

Beat the ATC strike

Headache? Tense, nervous headache? High blood pressure, stress and blood-shot eyes? Yes? So, how long have you been an air traffic controller, then? For those of you without the above symptoms — but think it would be "really neat" to look and feel like death warmed up — Western International from America have the ultimate in ATC simulations. Called *Tracon*, it promises to show *MindProse's* Kennedy Approach to the four winds (joke! that's a 3-3, 1-2-3, 2-1-3 and 3-4-3 Approach, you copy?). The claim being that the latter was a "game" while *Tracon* is pure simulation. Available on the PC, compatible with VGA downward, *Tracon* offers a variety of difficulty levels, pilot skills, weather and so on.

SPECTRUM STARTERS

Incidentally, I've had quite a few requests (mainly from Spectrum owners) about which adventure would make an ideal purchase for a beginner. Rather than splashing out on a Level 9 game and then finding out that adventures are not your thing after all (leaving you £19.95 down) there is an excellent four-pack produced for the Spectrum by respected adventure author, Walter Pooty. All four adventures are text-only. They contain logical puzzles (a rarity in text!) and are immensely enjoyable — I've played all four and heartily recommend them: *Mission Quest*, *Castle Adventure*, *Wishon X* and *Desert Island* can be purchased for a meagre £3.99 from *Walter Pooty*, 48 Exeter Road, Beetham, Liverpool L26 7BL.

I wouldn't be surprised if Gernsack were to

release a series of very interesting adventures based on that arch villain, Carmen Sandiego, now they handle those famous releases. *Endorban's* Carmen games (which include *Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?* and *Where in Time is Carmen Sandiego?*) mix adventure and (quite) education, while in *Time* it's a touch of geography, while in *Time* a smattering of history). However, I have heard good reports of this series to the extent that the educational side of things is totally transparent. The series is famed for its comprehensive packaging — normally some sort of massive encyclopedia.

American based Command Simulations have produced *Sitting at the Armistice* which lets you simulate the action at the Battle of the Bulge in 1944. Available on the Amiga is standard and a few versions. *Sitting at the Armistice* includes V4 rockets, German submarines, aerial bombardment and three map resolutions; while the enhanced one map version includes hidden movement, combat medal awards, better AI, adjustable intelligence reports, etc.

PARTICLES GALORE

It's PART! (well Right) lets shuffle over to Dr Gernsack's place for a touch of the old particle acceleration — he has a secret particle recipe, you know. Actually, PART! stands for Particle Accelerator and Reality Translator Integration. Dr Gernsack, a sort of Uncle Olive-type plot, was teaching the computer how to slow subatomic particles. He needed a human link (enter here in you) to achieve a mental connection with the computer, things

The ADVENTURE STRATEGY ROLEPLAY Column

Following exclusive details of *Ultima VI* in the October issue of Y&M, here are exclusive pictures of the PC VGA development. This means that *Ultima VI* is the first *Ultima* to be developed on a 16-bit computer. This also means that the Amiga and XT versions should benefit as a consequence. Previously, *Ultima* appeared on the Apple II 8-bit system first.



a mixture of sound and light, a hell

went predictably wrong, and, to cut a long story short, your mind is now in the computer. You, of course, have to get out — in a mental sort of way. Bit like Zen, I suppose. Anyway, PARTI, a pure text adventure written by Michael and Buffy Belyin (parents of Initials, Suspended and Lost Times in Tostoland), is available on the PC from America's First Row Software. Other versions (possibly C64 and Amiga) may follow.

GAP DOWN UNDER

Fans of Panther Games' Fire Brigade (awarded a Golden Scroll in TGM) may be interested to know that the next release from the Australian impresarios will be Public Gap. Incidentally, the original Fire Brigade made many friends, not least the US Army who are now using it to study the logistics of supply. Colleagues of mine in the States have even suggested that Fire Brigade may form the basis of a rather serious, second generation, ground warlike simulator for the US Army called, humbly enough, 20995.

After a second generation simulator, it's farthest from a second generation games reviewer. Goodnight, Good Bless and stay frothy...

Paul Raby, TGM, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.

C64 £18.99 (disk only)

DRAGON WARS

Interplay

They have been a bit quiet, haven't they? After what seems like ages, Interplay have produced another RPG. The game supports characters from the Bard's Tale trilogy, and so could easily be called Bard's Tale IV.

You and your party are off to find Gilmor, a legendary elf. (You know the sort of thing — planetside paired with gold, buses run



Spectrum £12.99

THE GENERAL

CCS

The General shows CCS and author Ian Williams at their most innovative. This is because they have tried to simulate Peter Tuman's Battlespace system. What's so innovative about that, then? Well, consider a few facts. The game is for the Spectrum, occupies a single disk (no disk simulator) and fits 48K — a daunting task, indeed it is the design of the gaming system that makes The General such a success.

The genre adopted is the Napoleonic era, a favourite of mine. However, instead of trying to simulate one particular battle (like in APC's Assault), and probably ignoring the wealth of developers due to a lack of historical features or whatever, Ian Williams has decided to present a mythical battle.

You represent a small European state which is being attacked through your only opening, a narrow valley. Due to the limited access, only a small number of the

enemy can attack at once.

The game offers good Fog of War features, such as distance (viewable by a tiny telescope feature) and smoke — a very important element which APC's Assault doesn't have. Similar to Battlespace, you give your orders in an English fashion — although it's a lot easier and quicker to use than Battlespace. Other features, such as realistic Napoleonic tactics, morale, reports and graphics, are all well integrated considering the lack of memory.

CCS are to be congratulated for producing such a well designed game which can be confidently recommended to any serious Spectrum Napoleonic wargamer.

STRATEGY 90%

on fire, etc.) However, after being shipwrecked, you are imprisoned on suspicion of sabotaging — a hat which has been recently outlawed by the dastardly King

Drake. You begin the game in Purgatory (not like Hellfire) from whence you must escape.

Interplay have taken the Bard's Tale system and upgraded it. Included elements is an effort to update it. The most important, but probably the most invisible, change is the introduction of an intricate plot. Interplay's Brian Fargo once told me that you could fully describe Bard's Tale I in about ten seconds (in the old, too). Dragon Wars introduces a much better storyline, utilizing more character interaction, strange clues and so on.

The combat is improved with quite complex choices on ranged combat, type of attack and defence, etc. Spells have been extended to include categories like Druid Magic and Dark Magic. Also, attributes have been redesigned and there's a handy 3-D auto-scrolling option.

The end product is an RPG which is far better balanced than the Bard's Tale series ever was. Character interaction is much improved making Dragon Wars an enjoyable topic, also delivering a good helping of humor.

RPG 83%



£5.00 (plus 1.00 p+p outside UK)

ADVENTURES ON THE SPECTRUM

Mike Gerrard, PO Box 7,
Ramsay, Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire PE17
2UZ

My first book review! This is an astounding book on Spectrum adventures by 'industry vet' Mike Gerrard, who has produced a 128-page tome mostly packed with useful solutions.

In addition to the tips, there are chapters on the history of adventures, buying adventures, clubs and magazines (author's TQM then!), creating your own mazes and several useful addendums. I doubt whether the seasoned adventurer will find too much to interest them, however, I do strongly recommend the book to any beginner (and those veterans contemplating they might cast as the advice is generally non-specific, while the adventures covered by the solutions were, in many cases, published on other formats besides the Spectrum).

The book is an ideal introduction to all things adventures. Giving helpful tips, advice and contents which would normally take quite a while to find by normal methods, it is good to have all of this in one compact book. *Recommended.*

PC, Amiga, ST £24.95

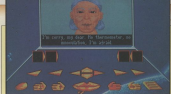
ARMADA AJC

Apart from a couple of reservations, I have been hugely impressed with Dr Peter Turner's strategy games. However, Armada is the first Battlespace game to utilise a novel war scenario. The heart of the Battlespace system remains intact but a wide range of modifiers change your tactical and strategic outlook.

For example, there are a variety of ship types: rugged and damaged sections of a ship can drag and foul other ships, hampering the efficiency of battle actions and so on. And you can board other ships, however, I was disappointed to learn that you cannot man an enemy ship with a friendly crew to fight on your side.

There are a variety of ships, cannons, tactical formations and so on but, again, it is a shame that the 'flexible' concept has been left out. Weather, as you might expect, plays a big part. It is also good to see that land attacks cover for the ships in certain cases.

The unique English order system is a moot point with the Battlespace series, but, whatever your opinion, you will need some time with it before you become comfortable. A unique option on the ST allows you to snapshot the current screen in printer or disk — ideal for record keeping. Speaking



Amiga, ST £24.95

TIME Empire

In a similar manner to Future Wars, Time has you bouncing back into the past to save the future becoming rather nasty.

You control an onscreen character, in this object-manipulation adventure. The action is confined to a small window while the game controls are placed below. They include speech, movement icons, an examine icon and an open/close icon. Four tiny windows represent your inventory space.

The game itself is rather easy. Objects cry out to be found as the examine eye icon opens when you pass an object. Just click on it to see what you have discovered.

Of graphics, the PC version really does need something more than the indistinguishable CGA support.

Battlespace is also trying out for some real-time animation instead of constant screen updates. The action would become far more subtle and scriptable. However, Armada is still an enjoyable and unique

and, interaction is limited, as is movement, a rather two-dimensional left and right.

The game includes quite a few characters who pass on various bits of information and who provide quite a few puzzles by being stubborn, refusing to give you an object, not letting you pass, etc.

I'm not too keen on some of the graphics. Although there's plenty of admirable facial animation, the characters tend to look like they have undergone drastic plastic surgery — and it hasn't quite healed yet...

Time can be recommended to beginners only. Simple fun with easy rewards.

ADVENTURE 74%

PC £24.95

GOLD OF THE AMERICAS

SSI/Electronic Arts

Gold of the Americas is a simple — but addictive — strategy game, for one to four players. The game is set in the days of Cortes and Drake, when the big European countries colonised the New World that was to become America.

You play one of the four big boys — England, Spain, France or Portugal — who are all set to grab as many colonies as possible. Game difficulty varies with which country you adopt as well as the usual individual skill settings. Your map of North and South America is conveniently divided up into territories, just waiting to be discovered.

You must tell your explorers off to discover each of these territories. If they manage to conquer the tribes who live there you can move in. Once the colony establishes itself, you can improve it, exploit, mine, import slaves and generally make a complete piggy ear of the whole country.

experience. It certainly puts the other naval strategy games (Percent Art of War at Sea, High Seas, etc) to shame.

STRATEGY 84%

However, income derived from your colonies is stripped by your taxable king who imposes amazingly high taxes. Other income is derived from trading other countries' cargo ships. Offending loads include the indigenous tribesmen, smoking stoves, saloons who seek indigenous dance, pirates and other countries putting the load in.

You have a total of 26 turns to find the most victory points to be regarded as the winner. As such, Gold of the Americas maybe relatively simple to play but it quickly becomes competing.

STRATEGY 87%



PC £24.95

THE THIRD COURIER

Accolade

Accolade's *The Third Courier* flings you into a world of spies, deceit, intrigue and sly codenames. You are Moonblower, master spy, on the trail of a set of stolen NATO defense plans.

Before you begin the actual game, though, you must create your character. This is done by selecting your sex, age, cover occupation and family leisure activity, upon which you will be given a range of fun attributes and select personality traits (which can either be advantageous or detrimental to your character). Finally, you will see your experience with its own grade levels.

While graphics are pretty good, PC sound is weak, without any sound board support. While the scenario is promising — an urgent, stealthy tale — the gameplay is somewhat flawed. Most character meetings are frequent, but the majority are worthless as most people have little useful to say.

This repetitiveness merged with the convoluted theme selections results in a game that fails a lot of opportunities rather than successful representation.

RPG

68%

Amiga £24.95

DUNGEON QUEST

IMAGE TECH

The game begins with a cry of help from a friend. In fact, you only have part of the damaged letter which tells of his imprisonment in an evil land, full of evil things etc. etc., deciding that you're totally off your rocker, you leave your fortune, abandon your happiness and head into your prison of mind to rescue this whining fool. Makes you look like inconsiderate some people are...

PC £24.95

AUSTERLITZ

ARC

3rd December 1805 — what were you doing that day, eh? Napoleon, was pretty busy. His Grand Armée faced the combined forces of the Austro-Russian army across the Danube Hill and the River Danube.

All of the classic Napoleonic formations and tactics are implemented. Troops vary in quality, artillery has a line of sight, troops can rout due to low morale and so on. Elements of the Fog of War are effectively introduced into Austerlitz with messengers taking time to deliver messages if they don't get shot on the way. It is a



Amiga £29.95

FUTURE WARS

Delphine

I must admit, even *The Sunday Sport* has never published a Windows *Delphine* review. However, that's exactly what Delphine has us doing in the latest award-winning French adventure.

The plot? The aliens have tried — and failed — to defeat the Earth in open conflict so they have turned devices. You must travel back to several time periods to stop them and plans.

In a similar way to the Sierra adventures, you must move your character around the screen, manipulating objects and solving puzzles. However, graphically and conceptually, *Future Wars* is far superior to Sierra's offerings. Animation elements are well done and the digitized effects are crisp and clear, as are the excellent integral graphics.

In a strange way, one of *Future Wars*'s biggest advantages is its largest failing. When you click the right mouse button a short menu will appear next to the cursor. This means that time is not wasted typing in text and you don't have to travel the screen to find the menu. However, this does reduce the number of commands available — text input would have allowed the scope for puzzles. Although cycling through the menu options eventually finds the response you need, *Future Wars*'s other fault is its precision in placing your character; often you'll be right easily into a trap. This can sometimes be very annoying.

However, on the whole, *Future Wars* can be recommended for adventures everywhere.

ADVENTURE

82%

Spectrum (48K or 128K)
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MAGNETIC MOON & STARSHIP QUEST

FSP Adventures, 40
Harvey Gardens,
Chesham, London SR7
8AJ.

In *Magnetic Moon*, you play like *Ellen*, part of the crew of the space ship *Stellar Queen*. Your task is to try to free the ship from the tractor beam originating from an alien moon. In the sequel, *Starship Quest* you must find the secret of the Keys to the Universe given to you by a princess.

Both adventures impressed me by the very high standard of design. In addition, there is a handy Visual Command listing recognised words. The standard of the puzzles in *Ellen* are high yet the plot, which includes a welcome visit of humor, moves at a brisk pace. The games give you handy prompts and pointers to aid you in case you become stuck.

The 128K versions of both contain extra locations and messages which increase the atmosphere and improve gameplay. I thoroughly recommend both adventures and can't wait to get my hands on the *Age of Not*, Larry's next release.

MAGNETIC MOON
STARSHIP QUEST

84%

86%

ply there is no smokes to obscure the view — smoke was a significant factor in Napoleonic warfare and often led to commanders ordering foolish actions due to them guessing what was going on. In addition, though, commanders only interpret orders according to their characters. So unpredictable results are sure to follow.

The battlescape system is the same as that in the *Armada* series and the same criticisms apply. Anyone who has an affinity for the very special period of historical warfare will enjoy this game — pity the order system produces such a slow game though.

STRATEGY

82%

WHAT NOW?

A mountain of letters crying for help on Adventures, RPGs and Strategy games has finally got the TGM team to twist my arm to get me to start a first aid tips section. Having broken arms, and always helpful, here I go...

Manhunter: New York

(PC, Amiga, ST)

Quite a few people out there appear to be having trouble finding the fourth module. You have to find out 'the' name and enter it into the MAC. This should lead you into the computer which is more than just a pretty face — *hee, hee*.

Wasteland

(C64, PC)

A few requests have reached me asking how the hell do you get into the Savage Village? What on earth is the password to enter the thing? Well, blow the wall down and strike a blow for freedom!

Having trouble being washed away in the waters? Go on, you can tell me, if you see, just use a rope — find the right spot along the river.

Beyond Zork

(Amiga, ST, PC, C64)

Giving specific hints for this game is tough as many of the puzzles are random in nature. However, if you find the Scroll of Poelal, hang on to it tightly. It can be used over and over again and is rather handy for getting you out of dead ends and the like. Don't forget to visit the 'what' for a free weapon. Oh, before you start using

Ultima IV

(PC, C64, Amiga, ST)

Come across Mistful? Followed her advice have you, *heh*? Got absolutely stuff all from it, and that I wouldn't worry about it because I've yet to see anyone get anything positive from her. Just ignore her, everyone else does.

688 Attack Sub

(PC)

Little did you know, comrade, that in the Target 78 mission there is a Soviet Alfa class sub lying quietly on the bottom to observe the exercise. Chase her off by running straight for her and pinging her a couple of times.

Also, in the Goulish scenario, where you are guarding a group of merchant ships from two surface vessels, you may run out of frustration as a squadron of black five bombers swoop in for the kill — you can't touch the aircraft with the weaponry available to you. You can engage the ships as soon as possible, though — because they are the ones that make the bombers in towards you, it'll keep their minds occupied.

unknown objects it might be a good idea to save the game, see what the object does, delete the game and you have the total: edge and a fresh object. Easy, eh? Try to make sure the pull color and the full name thoroughly before setting off anywhere else. They will open the game up to you, making progress a whole lot easier.

If you get the magazine, hang on to it as it is the most valuable item in the game. It will enable you to buy an equally valuable item later on. Carefully read the booklet if you are having trouble with the monkey-glinder at AcornbytheSea.

How onto the dreaded Christmas Tree monsters, watching their forest, making their lights and singing 'Deserain's The Dark-Ness Un-Queer'. These forests are kept at bay by a single glyph inscribed in snow. If you find that they block the westward path it is a catastrophe. It's not in the immediate vicinity, though.

King's Quest IV

(PC, Amiga, ST)

Can't safely eat the Ogyn's tea, and that, I'm sorry to say that this sequence is purely random. So keep trying, folks. Oh, the shovel can only be used five times and then it breaks, so use it with care. One obviously shoots at my local DRY shop.

Leisure Suit Larry II

(PC, Amiga, ST)

Having trouble with a, *er...*, 'full' skin top and RGB spies? Ahem, well if you managed to grab an object from the guard room — this may be of some use in the Jungle.

Ultima V

(PC, ST, C64)

Remember the coordinates given by the Demon for the Shard of Hahel? Yes, that Demon, well they're wrong — you know what demons are like. You may have believed that that very location and found a few grams of dust but not much else. The secret is to go down Coromus to the underworld, walk south to the mountains and then head off westward. That should put you on the right track, at least. Use a few gems while you're there, to see what's around.

Then there is Smith, the talking horse. (Sometimes I wonder about Ornel, I really do.) Anyway it is important to know where he is but his conversation is of no use. Unless you're Princess Anna and you're into that sort of thing.

Sentinel Worlds 1— Future Magic

(PC, C64)

The Demonstration is causing all kinds of confusion, mayhem, mental agony and frustration. (Sounds like a good game doesn't it?) The first level has three different room configurations, which are repeated throughout the level. So even if you think you are walking around in circles, you're not really. Each level is nine rooms wide by eight rooms high. So the area is manageable. Get the trusty graph paper out. Oh, and use a long range scanner for co-ordinates.

Bard's Tale II

(PC, C64)

The Min wheel of the ten on level four of Dagon's Tower is a bit of a bummer to feel left ST. Actually, it's in the dark area, in a small room, where the stairs up are located. Watch those spiders and gnomes, *heh*, I know — sometimes I wanted to permeate the game right through the window too, but that's another story.



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Computing is fun

Dear TGM
Iffy so some folks insist on missing the fun of computing? The two gentlemen that have disappeared my pages (see also Card and Illustrious letters (Readerpage, Dec 1991).

Both are writing about something that should bring joy to the lives of many. The advent of low-cost, powerful 32-bit home computing (ie, the Archimedes A6000) is undoubtedly a great thing, but what's that? Individually better than the ST and Amiga...

Consequently, being a tiny bit quieter than the ST and Amiga... Oh me, tickling already, are we? Yet do not deserve such needless divot. I thought the ST/Amiga thing had faded, but this time it's 32-bit letters trying to storm all over 16-biters (who up till now were busy doing the same to 8-biters everywhere), and threatening to reduce the 16-biters' glorious presence to zilch.

Why? Why laugh at your colleagues' institutions and dwelling hardware, instead of having fun with 16-bit? Please, 32-bit users, don't create an infinitely complex among 16-bit users (I just spat out on a 16-bit expansion and second drive), with too busy having fun.

Let's avoid another war. Technology isn't something you use against others, even when they're dog-faced Amigaoids like me. And if my effort to establish world peace fails, I dare not think what kind of havoc the appearance of cheap transputers might wreak... because have mercy! User Halls

Yes, yes...

Why don't people agree?

Dear TGM
Here comes an old chestnut or two but please bear with me. How game games reviews vary from mag to mag? Presumably, for a game to get good marks, it would have good plotting, decent stories, sound, graphics etc... But most of all, usability and value for money. So why did you give Grand Master 20% and advise buying High Tech World, which other mag have stopped off as being biased. Then, in Wordsday III, Dragon's Trap (page 171) you questioned whether anyone should pay £28.00 and (and/or) to recommend Wonder Boy III. Dragon's Lair (PC Engine 80%) which costs

£48.

Let's face it, they're two different games. The first, a thinker's platform adventure with nice graphics, loads of screens and good gameplay. What more could you want? I ask this and say nice things about the game because it's my opinion.

The second is a platform shoot-em-up from a very good arcade machine. I dare to remember. Does this mean shoot-em-ups are better than adventures? Of course not. It's all down to individual preference. Although, I do find it interesting to read someone else's opinion. How many reviewers favour a game because of their game preference and hence get carried away with the percentage figure? — I surely must happen, sometimes. On the question of VFM, the answer is no game (unless it's a

good sim or sports program) is worth £20.00, simply because once a game been completed or played to death, boredom and similarly creep in.

If 16-bit computer games rank they've got it bad, then just bear in mind the stupid prices on console games day. The solution would be to rent them from shops — in the same way as videos. Maybe, an arcade game could be rented out after it's fulfilled its life in the arcade. I don't suppose it would be feasible or practical — with different formats, prices etc — but it's an idea. What do others think?

John Beard, Mottob, Middlesbrough

John, we all share your concern with the current high software prices, but there seems no way around it. Software houses prevent a flow of software prices when the 16-bit

IBM misjudged

Dear TGM

I regret to inform you that you have misjudged the title The IBM can totally crush the Amiga or ST with its superior power.

I was annoyed at finding in TGM204 you reviewed video and only displayed CGA graphics. I know those are CGA, is it that the reviewers at TGM cannot afford a 1.2MB drive?

Now, about the title's poor sound. It is possible to buy a Roland MT-32 or an AdLib card to enhance the IBM's music capability beyond any Amiga. The MT-32 offers eight-note polyphony with percussion sounds. The AdLib offers similarly impressive capabilities. Well, I also a review in TGM saying that Fighter Bomber has bad sound. This game supports the MT-32 and so does NOT have bad sound but EXTREMELY GOOD sound! You also said that Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade has bad sound. This supports the AdLib card and so this also has good sound. And WHATEVER I ask is a review for some IBM MIDI software? I guess it just walked off. There are a growing number of games supporting these two sound boards so why don't you compare them and see what a difference it makes. Future if a game says it supports one of these or my box, say so. As a owner of an MT-32, I would think twice about buying a game that does not support the MT-32.

Finally, Elongor, Melbourne, Australia.

Where are you made? Living on the moon? Oh, Australia, yes. It just so happens that we spent many hours reviewing PC sound cards in the January issue of TGM. We also stated that we'd be mentioning any sound card support to all PC readers from now on. So what's all the moaning about?

So, it's true, you found out we do only have a proxy model. We Amigaed PC with CGA graphics to take pictures from. And the fact that our copy of Violet was an American import meant that the disk option wasn't available on 5.25-inch disk (yes, we've only got the one disk drive, too). However, for playability we've got a PC running at 42 kHz — double it, it's got a average monitor (better than CGA). For a true test we sometimes get Paul Rigby (who's so well he's got a V24 PC with all the goodies — including sound cards), to do the reviewing for us. You'll have noticed, in the previous issue of TGM, some great 16-bit PC shots of APO Dark Killer and CGA ones of David Hall's Special Agent... Paul Rigby did the reviews! As stated, Paul isn't reviewing you Amiga, but may not be familiar with what we're getting there.



machines and consoles become more popular. They're popular now but do you see any drop in prices? Don't make me laugh. After you want you do live. More company cars, more PDA assistants, more in-charge positions, more in-house programmers (under the thumb) and more pressure for good magazine reviews from software houses (gripe, gripe). I'll tell you the type of gamer/player that's got it all "boxed" out — the adventure. Have you seen any 2D or 3D adventures recently — bloody marvellous. Brilliant packaging, loads of background, comprehensive instructions and manuals and most of all depth in gameplay. And without trying to sound unpretentious (but actually doing a very good job of doing so), ever thought where all these great games are coming from — America.

Just a few years ago we were the envy of the Yanks. When they were still peddling about on boring Windows, about Atari 2800s and poor PCs, we had the cheap, colourful and fast Zeniths, and their cuddly and musical Commodore 64. These had the best specifications, we had the best designs and responsiveness (British had the best games). They think you've got more to our cleverness and quality now! But top programmers and sound and graphics links to live the high life in the States. And where's the innovation gone out of Britain? Alan Sugar would've it all up, he'd through his Jaguar and figured it would make as much money as De Lorean (another true British innovator).

But what news are we getting about? Prices? Yeah, no expensive aren't they?

Who's copying who?

Dear TGM
I buy both TGM and ZDAPRA/MSBGA (I won't say which one is better — you'd only send the heavy mail around).

Anyway, in January's issue you both reviewed F-29 Replicator, and after much close examination I found that both reviews were almost identical. I came to the conclusion that you copied ZDAPR because it came out almost a week earlier than you.

In TGM becoming lazy and having to resort to borrowing (or stealing) articles from other mags or are you just telepaths. Oh yeah, before I go, do you know if Day Hard is coming out

for Amiga?

Asad Gershtein, Northolt, Middlesex.

Minw... don't know if we should tell you about Day Hard if that's what you think of us. (Only joking)

It's about a year ago (and a very short amount of time through two reviews of the same game) if they think they're similar. In fact, if you'd have looked at the bottom of the TGM review you'd have seen the initials AH. Guess what they stand for? Alan Hogg. What's Peter Hogg? you ask. He's a strange Whiteaker who works for ZDAPR. Think, he's an absolute expert when it comes

to flight sims, so — in an effort at being the most objective review to the readers of TGM — we had to get Flight Commander Hogg to do the review. But why the same in both mags? In fact, Peter was extremely busy finishing ZDAPR when we were the magazine on him, and he didn't have time to immediately reply. He appreciated Anarchy about the point in changing a perfectly good review when Alan (who's an ex-TGMer incidentally) had done such a grand job to start with.

As for the Day Hard question, it said in ZDAPR that even the Day Hard... (just kidding). Latest news from Anarchy is that they

in its US development the guys over there can do little about getting an Amiga version, but programming it themselves. You'll be surprised at the amount of people eager to see Bruce Mills at the Amiga. The power of the people got Tishman Thompson programmed on the Amiga (to be released by Storm in April, so I can't see what harm a few letters to Anarchy concerning the Hard can do. Send your letters to: GRC HARD FOR THE AMIGA c/o BT I support). Anarchy (UK) Ltd, Stone House, Manor Farm Road, Reading, Berkshire RG2 5UN. Just tell me TGM sent you (they'll love that — lol).

Reflections on the Eighties

Dear TGM
Without doubt the end of the Eighties was the rise and fall of the software houses over the direction and availability of games in the marketplace. The close of the Eighties also saw the rising voice of discontent among many gamers over what they saw as type and clones. Likewise, they ignored games designers who felt they had something to offer the market in however humble a way. These two green weeds a chair singing in the wilderness.

As, one of the latter, I do not intend to pass through the Nineties (possibly my advancing years) without making an effort to claim them for my own. The prospect of advances in home computers and consoles are predicted for the new decade is a delight. The depression

sets in when you realise the software houses in many ways intend to carry on their slow march instead of veering forward to catch up with technology.

Dare I ask that all visionaries who are currently being ignored write to the end and we'll form a club. A forum where ideas can be shared, and one which can be tapped into by software houses, and gamers who'd like to know what we have to offer.

Write to me at the Bureau of Alternative Designs and Advanced Systems Software

(BADSASS), 35 Jersey Road, Croy, Inverness, Scotland IV1 2PL.

The decade of the Nineties will only belong to those who want to make it their own. Frank Connaghy, Inverness

It also seems a great pity that technology such as the CD-i equipment reviewed in Issue 27 only will come out for years yet — especially when Philips say they'll be releasing it for CDD. Although, we should be thankful that our software market is one of the most competitive in the world. Could you imagine being in Japan and having to play all those boring adventures or interest about on-logs.





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CHECK IT OUT ON MARCH 15!

Due to the dynamic nature of the computer market we can not guarantee that all the features mentioned will appear next month — but if anything is missed we'll replace it with something even better!

UNCLE MEL'S TRIVIA QUIZ

- 1) What did the following games have in common on launch: RobotCop, X-Men II, Falcon, Federation of Free Traders?
- 2) Within 2%, what percentage of the British population have a home computer?
- 3) Who is schoolboy Peter Parker better known as?
- 4) CRI have launched Search for the Titanic. When exactly did it sink?
- 5) What sci-fi weapon has been fitted to HM Navy Type-23 destroyers for the past ten years?
- 6) Unwieldy these mice: I had Games, Mouse Clay, it's a Rat
- 7) Steve or John? 50 years, when was Gary's code invented?
- 8) How many infected AIDS information virus disks were mailed out to business addresses around the world last December, and how many were delivered in the UK?
- 9) After turning in a profit of \$294,000 12 months ago, how much was Blue Chip Systems Software bought out for, to the nearest pound?
- 10) According to Software Toolworks' Bruce Lee Lives, when did he die, how old was he and how tall was he?
- 11) The GEMMITY keyboard layout was designed to be as difficult to operate as possible. Why?
- 12) What's the difference between Grand Prix and Master?
- 13) Who were Godzilla's adversaries in the following movies: Godzilla Versus Megalon, Godzilla Versus Hedorah, Godzilla Versus The Thing?
- 14) Code Masters claimed that their CD Games Pack contained 30 games. Why are they liars?
- 15) 1991 was the last year that used the same update system. When's the next one, and will it use the same?
- 16) Which of the following is not a genuine computer language: ALGOL, FORTRAN, BASIC, PASCAL?
- 17) Which mathematician gave his name to the square root sign?
- 18) Which film of Madonna's was used for the cover of Queen's latest album, The Miracle?
- 19) Which European country boasts the fastest-growing games software market?
- 20) Why did the US Viewer's Association want Mighty Mouse banned from TV?

Answers: 1) They were all released in 1989. 2) 10%. 3) Spider-Man. 4) 1984. 5) The USS Arizona. 6) 1989. 7) 1989. 8) 1989. 9) \$100 million. 10) \$100 million. 11) 1973. 12) 1989. 13) The Japanese. 14) 1989. 15) 1990. 16) 1989. 17) 1989. 18) 1989. 19) 1989. 20) 1989.

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